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Author:
Tinkham, Julian Rumsey

Title:
The debunkment of advertising and prosperity

Place:
[New York]

Date:
[1930]

94-82149-2
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BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD

BUSINESS
253
T49

Tinkham, Julian Rumsey, 1856–

The debunkment of advertising and prosperity [by] Julian Tinkham. 1928–1930. [New York, Printed by J. J. Little & Ives company, ©1930]

2 p. l., 131 p. illus. 23½cm.

The second section "Advertising is non-essential—tax it!" published separately in 1918.

1. Advertising. 2. Advertising—Taxation. I. Title.

30-33114

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DATE FILMED: 6-29-94 INITIALS: KLB

TRACKING # : MSH 01808

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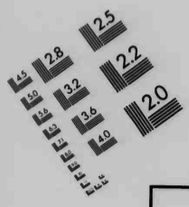
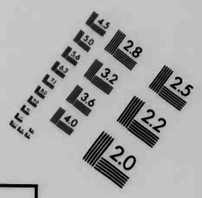
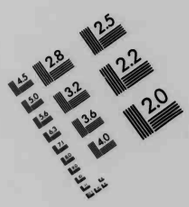
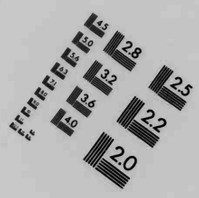
1.5 mm ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

PM-MGP 13"x18"
METRIC GENERAL PURPOSE TARGET
PHOTOGRAPHIC









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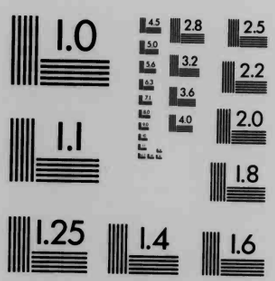

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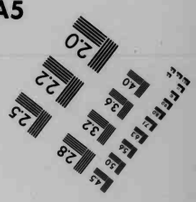

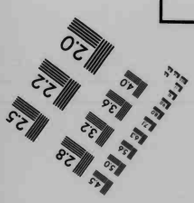

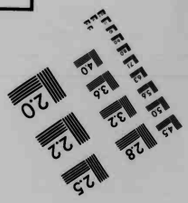

PRECISION℠ RESOLUTION TARGETS

Century

A&P

1303 Geneva Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55119

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4.5 mm

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The DEBUNKMENT of Advertising and Prosperity

JULIAN TINKHAM

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School of Business

THE DEBUNKMENT OF ADVERTISING
AND PROSPERITY BY JULIAN TINKHAM
130 PAGES ILLUSTRATED $2. PUBLISHED
J. R. TINKHAM, 60 W. 10th ST., NEW YORK

The Debunkment of Advertising and Prosperity

JULIAN TINKHAM

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Dedicated to the Preservation
of Nature's Fair Face

THE DEBUNKMENT OF ADVERTISING AND PROSPERITY

INTRODUCTION

In the Atlantic Monthly for May, 1926, there appeared "The Truth about Advertising" by Earnest Elmo Calkins. As Mr. Calkins was awarded the 1925 gold medal for "Distinguished Personal Service in Advertising" in the annual Harvard Advertising Awards founded by Edward W. Bok, I welcomed this article as the last word that could be said in defence of this subject. Here was the *official* and *comprehensive* statement, for which I had been looking, of the virtues and attainments universally claimed by Business for this so-called *selling force*. I was disappointed, however, after perusal to find that the "last word" used no arguments and disclosed no facts that were not presented by the profession in 1917 when I asked the same question as Mr. Calkins: admitting that advertising pays the advertiser and the professional advertising man, does it pay society? Is mankind as a whole the better off for it?

Now as then the claim is made that advertising is substantially the whole thing in modern life, the supreme creator of its civilization, responsible for its inventions, science and art—society's greatest educator—without which we would never have anything nor have gotton anywhere much worthwhile. From one who had been decorated by the All Highest in Advertising something like this was, I suppose, to have been expected.

It goes without saying that in 1917 I crossed swords with no such distinguished authority as Mr. Calkins; no advertising man answered the questions I raised from the

columns of the Atlantic, America's foremost literary magazine. The answers to my criticisms then were from lesser lights in the profession whose pens could probably not have captured the Atlantic, but Mr. Calkins, albeit in better English, speaks their identical language, replete with the same sophistry and specious, undemonstrated assumptions. Wherefore this irresistible impulse to challenge Mr. Calkins' truth about advertising, and once more gainsay the profession's extravagant and uneconomical claims.

Mr. Calkins is, so to speak, the official *literary* spokesman for the business—his own profession. His article gave in plausible, pópular style all the current standard sophistications that can be said for it as a public benefaction. But it must be borne in mind that as an interested preacher he is really disqualified to preach the advertising faith on any but business grounds. When, therefore, as in this instance, he enters the arena of literature to champion it as anything more than selling propaganda (as, let us say, perhaps the greatest aesthetic, cultural and civilizing influence humanity has ever known), his truth about advertising invites and deserves the most searching analysis and criticism, for Mr. Calkins' truth is indeed the truth only as seen by professional eyes and is very foreign to the truth as seen by any thinking layman's eyes. Which of the two is *the* truth on this subject (both cannot be it), let everyone decide for himself.

The truth as this layman sees it is that we are living in a nerve-racking nightmare of advertising unreality that is threatening our culture if not our sanity. For unless my eyes deceive me the bulk of commercial advertising consists of uniformatory boasting—boost—about countless familiar articles from the great food staples and necessaries to the luxuries and superfluities of social existence, the attempt of competitors to increase sales over each other. Thus all save a negligible quantity appears to be but an incident of competition, without educational value and, as an economic factor, conspicuously weak in that it is concerned only with consump-

tion regardless of wisdom or providence. This salient characteristic is not stressed by Mr. Calkins; an unpardonable omission, I would say, in an article purporting to give the public the truth about advertising from the inside. He states his position as follows:

> "I am not here interested in advertising from the point of view of the advertiser, or of the man who makes his living by preparing advertising. Both have their problems and those problems are part of my job. But here I am trying to look at it as one of the public using my technical knowedge to correct the errors into which writers outside of the profession and some inside fall when they try to reckon the good or ill that advertising does to all of us."

Again:

> "In considering the value and necessity of advertising we must accept the present civilization in which we live. To discuss whether advertising would be necessary in Utopia would be unnecessary, though that is the argument of Stuart Chase. But life being what it is in this country at this moment, could we have what we now have without advertising? Since most people live by making and selling goods, can they go on making and selling goods without advertising?"

His conclusion is:

> "If it is good for us, the public, to have goods made for us it is good to have them sold to us."

To which piece of sophistry I would answer that it depends entirely on what the goods are, both in kind and quality, whether we want and need them or not and what price we are to pay for them, with all of which advertising is not in the least concerned, getting us to buy them being its only function and hocus-pocus its chief means to that end.

The plan followed in the first section of this book will be to let Mr. Calkins speak for himself by giving extracts from The Truth about Advertising and commenting thereon separately. Readers who are not familiar with the article will thus become acquainted with its contentions. The extracts will not follow the order of their appearance which is not important, there being in the article no particularly logical sequence of argument and the

same argument being applied indiscriminately to all phases of human existence.

"Advertising is a machine for making it easier to live the way we now live."

This dictum of Mr. Calkins it is my ambition to elucidate.

The second section deals with a small demonstration made against the "Force" in 1917-18, an account of which was published then. It was war time and the advertising interests sold themselves to both sides of the great conflict between national conservation and business; *for* thrift and economy under the government's banner and *for* peace-time consumption and extravagance under commercialism. It will be found very enlightening as to the similarity of the then advertising mind with that of 1928.

THE YOUNG ADVERTISING APPRENTICE HAS QUALMS OF CONSCIENCE.

The Truth about Advertising opens as follows:

"A young man who had just joined the staff of one of the larger advertising agencies sought his boss in some perturbation. 'I wish you would tell me the truth about this advertising business, chief. Is it all bunk?' To which his employer replied, 'There is just as much bunk in advertising as there is in law or medicine, or for that matter in literature and life, but it is never necessary to use bunk to practice advertising successfully.' "

Mr. Calkins thinks that young man's state of mind was the natural result of his reading the "animadversions of the ultra-intellectual world." I hardly think that likely. The young man's state of mind was almost certainly due to reading advertisements. He suspected bunk (and no wonder) but would not admit it to himself; his conscience probably troubled him to be making a living out of bunk and he needed reassurance that it was all right. His chief gave it to him but did not answer his question; he said it was never necessary to use bunk to practice advertising successfully. There is where I differ with the chief.

Bunk is absolutely necessary for success in advertising for it is addressed to the unthinking majority of our population, 75% of whose intelligence, I understand, is not above that of the average thirteen year old child which laps up bunk greedily. And the success of advertising-bunk in getting the consumer's dollar should be proof positive of the average consumer's childish credulity.

If Mr. Calkins' young man had asked me I would have answered something like this: My son, advertising that pretends to be anything more than a great selling propaganda to induce buying, or to be a producing agent, or to be concerned with anything but consumption, or to be any guaranty of quality, *IS ALL BUNK*. Short of

downright fraud, advertising cannot question the quality of an article whether it be good or bad, nor its usefulness to society, an indulgence like cigarettes and a necessity like bread receiving the same treatment. Only how to persuade society into buying it is the advertising man's business and what he is called in for.

As the priesthood and religion have always held people in the throes of superstition for selfish ends so do the high priests of advertising hypnotize the unthinking masses to buy and buy again up to their last cent, regardless of needs and wisdom; it makes prosperity (for some one). A wise man he who, living amidst today's interminable and omnipresent advertising parade, can keep his cash out of the advertiser's pockets; if he has any their business is to get it, and we know all the american world loves an advertiser next best to a lover. Business is our religion and our gods are Boost and Publicity; beware, young man, how you offend them, lest you lose your job.

Paragraphs one and two of Mr. Calkins' article are devoted to a review of the criticism of advertising and to a list of its critics. He does not deny many of advertising's shortcomings and regrets them, but as a whole considers them of no importance compared to advertising's benefits to society, and brushes them aside lightly without dwelling on or even mentioning glaring economic absurdities which a *truth* article should have called to the attention of the public.

But Mr. Calkins' whole defence of his profession is based upon the premise that the client for whom he holds a brief is a producing agent and a necessity as indispensable as railroads, in fact the father of all our material and some of our spiritual progress, without which civilization would still be in the backwoods where it was fifty or more years ago. In his fantastic economics advertising is wealth; the truth of this premise he does not attempt to demonstrate, it is assumed and implied throughout his paper and is the chief bunk that permeates the whole business.

DOMESTIC HARDSHIPS IN PREHISTORIC ADVERTISING TIMES.

After first describing his mother's old-fashioned kitchen of fifty years ago, and the horrors of it, he puts

"such a kitchen beside the one pictured in most advertisements selling kitchen equipment or those complete ones in the housekeeping departments of the woman's magazines. 'How to furnish the ideal kitchen.' You say I am contrasting a poor woman's kitchen of fifty years ago with that of a woman of means today—not at all. What my mother contended with was what they all had. If she could have afforded it she would have hired another woman to struggle with it. It was not a matter of wealth at all. It was a question of facilities available. That was all they had—raw materials, a few crude tools, and 'elbow grease'! The amelioration that has come about in fifty years *is due directly and indirectly to advertising.*"

Again:

"When I was a boy, about fifty years ago, more or less, mother used to buy a bar of castile soap half a yard long and four inches square and saw it up (she kept an old saw for the purpose) into cakes an inch thick. . . . It took weeks of use to wear it down so that it comfortably fitted the hand. Today we have a cake of soap, a great many of them, just the right shape to fit the hand . . . and when we want another cake we go to the nearest grocery or drug store and there it is."

Marvelous! And more marvelous still, there it was sixty years ago when *I* was a boy! How came they there, and how came we to know they were there, for it was before the advent of the great national advertising Messiah?

Let me see, I can remember cakes of soap certainly, also crackers and cheese and sugar and coffee and, yes, come to think of it, *bread*, too, homemade, delicious, appetizing thin slices, which we ate without first having to be made bread-conscious by pictures of ecstatic little boys biting into horse slices two inches thick of grocery bread (the staff of life monstrosities, "Grandma," "Aunt Jemima," "Tip-Top" and "Bond" had not been born).

It is shocking, the unadvertised articles that were in common use then and the labor-saving household inventions that had crept into our lives, the natural result of

supply and demand. But that was before we had experienced the blessings of standardization—had not begun to "live nationally as regards the goods we consumed" and did not know enough not to buy anything that had not been nationally advertised from the Atlantic to the Pacific. We were still individualized and reacted spontaneously to our living problems without prompting of any kind. Reminiscing further of boyhood days, I recall the excitement in the family caused by some member's finding a cherry-stoner in a hardware store when cherry preserving time came around and my delight at being delegated to work it in the kitchen. According to Mr. Calkins this utensil should not have been invented until it had been advertised, nor should we, without some kind of an advertising picture with a "message" have had sense enough to react to the need of the hour by trying a store to see if such a thing existed.

WITHOUT ADVERTISING RETAIL STORES WOULD NOT, COULD NOT BE!

My mother had to send me away from the breakfast table sometimes to complete my toilet by brushing my teeth. We must have had good dentifrice and brushes in 1868 because the teeth are still there, yet advertising had not told us about pyorrhea, and Colgate and competitors were not overwhelming us then with their fast and furious campaigns to sell God knows how many brands of toothpaste, each trying to corral the national market ahead of the other. Yet the Truth about Advertising would have me believe that if they did not do it my neighboring drug store would not carry toothpaste! And without similar advertising of every conceivable human want no stores would carry anything we need. Tantamount to saying that storekeepers are helpless nonentities and take no initiative in stocking nor restocking their stores with what the community needs and will buy—they have to wait for advertising to tell them. Listen to some of Mr.

Calkins' reasoning, addressed to us, to substantiate this buncombe theory:

"Your material life consists of a long list of named products, utensils, commodities, foods, wearing apparel, toilet articles, tools with which you perform the operation of living—feeding your family, keeping house, dressing yourself and your children, playthings and work things. Not all of these articles are vitally necessary. Some of them may have been adopted through the persuasiveness of advertising. But there is an irreducible minimum which you cannot do without, our modern civilization being what it is. It is manifestly convenient to you that the shops in your town have these things in stock when you want them. The fact that they are there is the result of what is technically known as distribution and *without advertising distribution would be impossible.*"

The objection to my mind of this fascinating distribution theory is that thousands of tons of fresh vegetables, fruit, fish, poultry, game, meat pour into our markets daily and are distributed according to the laws of supply and demand amongst New York's seven millions of population without any advertising whatsoever. No text advising us and no pictures showing us how to eat spinach, potatoes, carrots, onions, oysters, chickens and all the rest of our diet. How account for it?

Furthermore, most of Mr. Calkins' long list of named products—at least the "irreducible minimum which we cannot do without," that are so lavishly advertised today both locally and nationally were in common use 60 years ago, long before national advertising, "quantity production" or sealed packages obfuscated our housekeeping; they were distributed then and were ours for the asking at our shops if we had the wherewithal.

Yes, even chewing gum, the indispensable 100% american diversion, was "distributed," not in such quantities that we tracked it from the streets into our parlors on the soles of our shoes, but it could be bought, not "candy coated," it is true (plain spruce gum) for in those days there were no Wrigleys, Chiclets, Beech Nut et al. with heaven-born messages and millions of dollars, competing for the privilege of nationally gumming up the soles of our shoes, exercising our jaws and making our saliva

flow. This amelioration in the labor of chewing gum is due to advertising. The Statue of Liberty is all very well but no wonder our greatest thrill on returning from abroad is Wrigley's mammoth sign on the Jersey shore!

Let me quote further paragraphs from Mr. Calkins' technical diagnosis of distribution:

"We all know, of course, that in these days the maker seldom sells direct to the public. (Did he ever to any extent? Ed.) He sells to the retail dealer, who in turn sells to the consumer. We will skip over the jobber who is merely a cog in the distributing machinery, to simplify our story. Now the retailer is merely a convenience. His store is on Main Street in your town to save you the long journey to the factory (!) where the goods are made. It is of the utmost importance that your particular store *should have the goods you want.* If it does not then you suffer the inconvenience of waiting until they are sent for, or of hunting another store which does have them, or of buying a different article in place of the one you want."

I must exclaim at the sublime conceit of the advertising fraternity that thinks it knows the goods "we want"! Standardization of taste is their object, they to set the standard. Individuality of taste is ours; we have "no particular store," know not the advertisements and have never felt the necessity of enlisting their services.

LIVE "NATIONALLY" OR STARVE.

"Whether it is better for us to live nationally as regards the goods we consume, or locally, is too large a question to discuss within the scope of this paper. The fact remains that we do live nationally (*we did not before 1890*), that by far the greater quantity of goods now made is sold to the country as a whole—or, if not yet nationally sold, that is the goal aimed at. It is this fact that has evolved what is disparagingly called 'big business'. It means that a manufacturer can count on a market comprising the whole United States. More than that, he must count on the whole United States if he is going to manufacture a large enough quantity of goods to reduce the cost to the point where he can compete with other manufacturers of the same goods. We will ignore for a moment the purely competitive side of this. It is true that two products of the same kind compete for the trade of the consumer. If there are five toothpastes all equally good, one brand would be sufficient. But that allows nothing for the instinc-

tive individuality of choice, for the spur that competition offers to improvements in quality and reductions in price. If there were only one brand of toothpaste in existence, it would be necessary to create another for the benefit of the toothpaste consumer."

"Instinctive individuality of choice"; are we supposed to have any since advertising minds took charge of our education? I hope my readers are conscious of the joys of living nationally. It has always been very repellent to me and I have never surrendered to it. If they do not like it let me whisper in their ears that they too can continue to live locally, if they but will and without any long journeys to the factory nor serious inconvenience in their marketing either. Furthermore by exercising a little ingenuity they can live both better and cheaper than by living nationally.

THE FATE OF THE MAN WHO BOASTED HE NEVER READ ADVERTISEMENTS.

But beware: listen to what befell the unknown warrior who tried to cling to his individuality; I quote again from The Truth:

"A familiar paradox is the man who tells you with much earnestness that he never reads advertising and does not believe in it. And as he sits there he is dressed from head to foot in advertised clothes."

Yes, I can see him sitting there, the miserable wretch. Dared to boast of ignoring the great selling force indeed! On his head Glostora keeps his hair neat, orderly and rich looking—gives it that glossy, well-groomed effect to match his style-built coat and style-plus pants; on his feet are O'Sullivan heels, around his neck a Van-Damn collar; in one hand a Truly Warner hat; in the other a bottle of Bell-Ans—for he has eaten (as admonished) "more" of apples, crackers, milk, yeast, cranberries and fish than was good for him.

Was it *his* scalp, dangling from the Calkins belt that brought the decoration for Distinguished Personal Ser-

vice? As likely as not and this is what, in all probability, was said about it in the acceptance speech to The All Highest.

"It was not necessary for him to read the advertising. The advertising he did not read distributed the goods, brought them within his reach, geographically and financially, and keeps them there for his benefit—better things than he could buy for the same money but for the tremendous savings that quantity production brings about. *And most of them would not exist, to say nothing of being distributed, if there had not been advertising.*"

Yes, the advertising got him in the end; hounded from morn to midnight, he read it subconsciously until his sanity gave way. A suburbanite, twice a day for years, he ran the gauntlet of boost between home and office, scourged every foot of the way by advertising whips that had no mercy for "sensitive people." The Erie cars gave him his first dose in the morning, his last at night. After the Erie, the Hudson Tube, our business introduction to Dante's Inferno. There the advertising monsters, Colgate, Wrigley, Listerine and Co., administered the 3rd degree in publicity horrors to his bleeding soul. Rising to the surface in Manhattan, the elevated took him in hand and rubbed it in some more with a full line of masterpieces from Mr. Calkins' gallery. Pluto ladies raised false hopes, the Ralston boy-devil jumped at him out of a dark corner, the Z.I.P. lady's arm-pit haunted him. Father John soothingly covered up his station's name, so he was carried by. All contributed to making "life more restful" for him.

Of course, if advertising is responsible for the distribution to retail stores of everything we need, should anything suddenly happen to it overnight, causing it to disappear, the stores would have nothing to sell, their proprietors would fail and their customers would starve. No other conclusion seems possible.

Ten years ago when I first began to question the value of advertising to society, the principal flour manufacturers of the country, Pillsbury, Washburn-Crosby and Hecker were boosting their respective brands nation-

The relentless nightmare that pursued the Unknown Warrior

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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The relentless nightmare that pursued the Unknown Warrior

wide with huge signs along the railroads, along the highways, on buildings, everywhere. Of late years these seem for some unaccountable reason, to have entirely vanished. Has flour likewise vanished from the groceries? Not at all, it is there as we know, just the same. Will some advertising sage please explain? *

THE QUALITY TEST: "IT'S ADVERTISED."

National advertisers aim to convert retail storekeepers into unthinking robots who will only stock such brands of staples in "sealed packages" as unthinking customers have been taught by advertisers parrot-like to ask for.

Knowing the thirteen year old intelligence of the vast majority of the population, by spending millions (or is it billions now?) on interminable repetition of the names of their respective brands and slogans accompanied by the same empty boost but with new pictures to catch the eye (any picture will do provided it is new) they aim to get the average consumer thinking not of bread or coffee, let us say, but of the brands, "Grandma's," "Wards" or "Bond" for bread, and "Maxwell House," "Yuban" or "Mazon" for coffee to the end that when buying he will ask for a brand, not the article itself.

To manufacturers nationally inclined, the ideal storekeeper is one who has no opinion of his own about the quality of the goods he sells, and is without pride in his business, without ambition or much intelligence. A perfect automaton in fact, satisfied to feel no responsibility and to leave it all to the advertisers. If you happen to be a fastidious customer and ask him about the quality of what you are buying, he'll answer, "It's advertised," which is all he knows and all the satisfaction you will get.

"The national advertisers need delivery agents, not merchants, for their goods. The less the agent can say, the better for them. I went into a hardware store to buy a wrench. The salesman

* Further interesting particulars about flour advertising in war-time will be found in the Second Section.

brought two wrenches, one of which he priced at $1.00 and the other at $1.50. I examined the two wrenches carefully and so far as I could see there was nothing about the wrenches to account for the great difference in price. I asked the salesman whether he knew what the difference in them was. 'Why,' he said, pointing to the $1.50 wrench, 'This one is the famous XXX wrench which is advertised in all the magazines.' 'I know that,' I replied, 'what I would like to know is where the fifty percent difference in quality comes in.' He looked at me a little blankly, then said he would ask the merchant himself about the matter. The owner, evidently interested by my inquiry, came over with the salesman. He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and said: 'To be perfectly frank with you, there is no difference between the wrenches themselves. The XXX wrench is widely advertised. Many of my customers ask for it. It costs me more than half again as much as the other, and I have to charge my customers accordingly.'" *

THE SUNSHINE-UNEEDA BOOST CONTEST.

As I opened the door of my "favorite" Montclair delicatessen shop recently, I ran into a whirlwind Sunshine Cracker salesman in the very act of loading up the proprietor with "really advertised" soda crackers. He did not waste words on the quality of this new cracker for of course it was exactly like all others on the market, except in name which was to be "Krispy Cracker" (crispy spelled with a K); he held forth only upon the superhuman amount of advertising this cracker was to enjoy. Millions were to be poured out to thrill the world with its message: "The flakiest soda cracker ever—Saline Type —Waxpaper Wrapper." His arms were outstretched holding a poster to appear Monday at all L and subway stations, simultaneously with page ads in all the New York and Newark dailies. I was thrilled indeed, for here was the answer to the L card over which I had marveled:

"Thanks, everybody in this city for having eaten 11,082,622 Sunshine Soda-Crackers more in March"!

* This quotation is from "National Advertising vs. Prosperity" by Ralph Borsodi. The Arcadia Press, 2 East 23rd St., New York, 1928. Mr. Borsodi has had experience in the advertising business and is a learned analyst of his subject.

The Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company had caught the National Biscuit Company napping and the public was switching from Uneedas to Sunshine—Loose-Wiles had out-advertised National Biscuit! Krispy Cracker was to bring the cracker diet of the metropolitan area back to the saturation point, last touched in 1918 when National Biscuit made a record with Uneedas that nearly killed the public.

It is easy to see how this cracker boost contest profited the advertising business, likewise the advertiser (one at a time), but how it profited the public who paid for it Mr. Calkins will have to explain. My opinion is the public got left, for I can buy a better cracker than either Sunshine or Uneeda that is not advertised hereabouts, yet is "distributed" and to be had at "the better stores." Professional ethics forbids my naming it out loud otherwise than as a "certain soda cracker." But if Mr. Calkins longs to taste again the cracker of his boyhood he shall have its name in private, also where it can be bought.

PHILANTHROPIC ADVERTISERS.

The manufacturers want to be the whole works, both fabricants and retailers. More often than not, Mr. Calkins says, they are "unselfish altruists," doing it for our "good" as the advertising profession is constantly telling us. Why of course, the more we are influenced by their ads and buy, the more the advertisers will be obliged to make, the more they make the cheaper they can make it, and the more they will reduce the price to us.

"And not only is cost of making lessened but also cost of selling, including cost of advertising. And the cost of selling can be and is lessened until the advertising costs nothing."

"*Nothing*" in this case meaning, I suppose, one and one half billions of dollars (figuratively speaking). I recall headlines in New York Times of July 11, 1928:

"ADVERTISING COST PUT AT 1 AND ½ BILLION.

F. H. Sisson of New York, Tells Convention at Detroit, Nation Spent That in 1927."

Now as to reducing the price to us: *Do* they ever? That we never know for they never offer to show us their books.

My personal experience is that prices have steadily risen since the advent of national advertising and that sealed packages are apt to be short weight—we get more bulk (more inflation) with our cereals but less real wheat, rice and corn. Mass production of food spells deterioration in quality. The patent labor-saving, self-raising flours, buckwheat for instance and "Quaker Oats, the world's *quickest* breakfast," are marvelous inventions but who with palate so undiscriminating that accepts them for the buckwheat cakes and Irish Oatmeal of prehistoric advertising times?

THE PARABLE OF THE SOAP, SOUP AND SEALING-WAX PRODUCERS.

Mr. Calkins is delightful reading when he dips into the economics of trade:

"Here are three men: A makes soaps, B soups and C sealing wax. A needs sealing wax but does not buy it because business is not good and he cannot afford it. His source of income is B, the soap buyer, and B isn't buying any soap. The reason B isn't buying soap just now is that the soup business is not good. No one is buying soup. Does A sit in his shop, longing for sealing wax and waiting for customers? No, he advertises. He tempts B with pictures of soap, with text about soap, to create a desire for soap on the part of B. By this effort, by breaking up the inertia, he starts a movement. For when B buys a cake of soap of A, A has money, which he uses to buy sealing wax of C, and C immediately supplies himself with soup from B. Nor has A's example been lost on B and C. They too make efforts to sell; that is, they advertise their respective soups and sealing wax to each other and to A, and thus keep up the merry exchange, which spreads to cabbages and kings and to the other letters of the alphabet. That is, A's natural efforts to sell the soaps by which he makes his living are extended by advertising. All selling is ad-

vertising, and all advertising is but an extension of the first instinctive effort to sell what one has to sell."

From this picture it would seem that when business is not good and you cannot afford to buy something you want, all you have to do is to advertise in order to intrigue at once a customer into buying your goods altho the customer's business is poor too and he really cannot afford it, in fact, common sense had decided him to curtail purchases of supplies for the time being. This was B the soup maker; no one was buying his soup. But B was a weak character and the wonder is his business had lasted as long as it had, for when he saw A's advertisement with "pictures and text" he fell for it at once and gave A a thumping big order. When Mr. Calkins says, however, A "tempted B with pictures of soap" in his advertisement, he is probably inaccurate; he most likely tempted him with pictures of a beautiful lady stepping nude and smiling out of an immaculate tub and dangling soap before B's dazzled eyes. Text: "Blush for me but buy A's soap," which B did, starting a movement and "breaking up the inertia," and, presto change, poor business was at once turned into good business—bad times into good times.

It is difficult however to understand how A, who could not afford to buy sealing wax, could afford to advertise. Where did he get the money from? And B, who could not afford to buy soap because nobody was buying soup, suddenly ran into a shower of gold the moment he saw A's ad! To the hard headed business man this is certainly surprising and looks as though the political economy of John Stuart Mill was all apple sauce. Trade is no longer based upon supply and demand; if business is in poor health it is due to "inertia," a kind of sleeping sickness, the cure for which is advertising—one dose taken in time warranted to start people trading, swapping goods, with feverish intensity.

The closing lines of the A, B, C episode are very Calkinesque; let me repeat them:

1. "All selling is advertising and all advertising is but an extension of selling." Exception must be taken to both propositions: selling is not advertising at all and there can be no such thing as extension of selling. Selling takes place simultaneously with buying and only then and vice-versa. For to effect any exchange of property both buyer and seller are requisite and when they come together on price there is a trade. The process may be extended indefinitely without advertising; witness trading on the Stock Exchange. Advertising *stimulates buying.* It is a strong stimulant used by sellers to dope buyers into consumption of their particular goods and like all such stimulants, bad for the buyer. He were much better off were his purchases but the uninfluenced reaction of his natural wants, common sense and state of pocketbook.

2. "The day A opened his soap shop and tacked his sign over the door he began to advertise." Curious idea; as well say a name plate on our front door is advertising. A put his sign up to give useful and necessary business information which the average advertisement is as void of as it is replete with the emptiness of misleading boost by publicity literati.

> Every little coffee bean has a meaning all its own,
> Find the meaning in my coffee.
> Alice Foote McDougal (photo of the bean and the lady)

3. "And all advertising is but an extension of the first instinctive effort to sell what one has to sell." It is difficult to see how advertising can *extend* what never existed. One does not sell *instinctively* ever, selling is not a subconscious act; eventually one sells *necessarily* to complete speculations that have been preceded by buying, whether in manufacture, farming or stocks. If one *cannot* sell when the time comes owing to the absence of buyers, one is apt to go broke.

THE BICYCLE BUSINESS AND ADVERTISING.

Without pretending to experience in big business, once in my checkered career it was permitted to me to use advertising and observe its workings in small business. I hope readers will think the following personal digression worth while to our thesis; it seems so to me. About 1890 I left Wall Street, stagnant at that time, to go into the bicycle business (retail) which was coming to the fore most promisingly. The "safety" bicycle had recently been invented in England. It was called safety in contradistinction to the high machine called ordinary, which although picturesque was neither very safe nor efficient, wherefore the machine's use was restricted to a small class of courageous sports and never became in any sense popular. The advent of the safety however revolutionized cycling and man's means of getting about on wheels by self propulsion, for it simultaneously took the weight of his body off his legs and multiplied their power nearly five times. Naturally it made instant appeal to the imagination, sold itself at sight and soon developed all the attributes of a craze. What had advertising to do with begetting it, improving it, teaching people its use, "distributing" it? Let us see.

The bicycle was the precursor of the motor car in its revolutionary characteristics; it gave man two or three times the average speed of a horse and many times the horse's endurance. No wonder it got agoing, enjoyed quantity production and reduction in price, as I distinctly remember, all without "pictures and text". Indeed until competition arose between manufacturers and only then was there any intensive advertising of bicycles which well illustrates the competitive nature of Mr. Calkins' selling force and its uselessness to society.

The history of the manufacture and sale of bicycles in the United States as an exclusive business is short, but instructive on several points besides advertising. Witness particularly its brief, unhealthy career and ultimate collapse due to protection. The importation of english

bicycles, the first used here, began about 1890. The duty was 60%, if I remember rightly, and they retailed at from $125 to $175. As there were none made here then, our supply was small, not equal to the demand, and english factories had the american market to themselves, but not for long; the high retail price for their goods, necessitated by the duty, showed too great a profit over the possible manufacturing cost here not to tempt immediately fabricants of every kind and size in this country to try their hand at the game too. The result was the american made safety, thrown together in a hurry, much inferior to the english article in every way, but for which, owing to the great demand, nearly the same price could be asked. It was a shoddy affair at the start and riders not infrequently returned their purchase to the store in two pieces.

By 1895 everybody from cabbages (New York East Side) to kings (Newport Society and the Stock Exchange) had learned to ride and demanded bicycles faster than the factories made them. It was the banner year for the manufacturer, but the retailer's life was not a happy one. His store was always full of customers, not so of wheels, and orders were frequently cancelled before he could fill them. After the most hectic of seasons, accompanied by the largest of payrolls, profits were not found to be anything extraordinary. By 1896 we could get the machines but buyers were shy. By 1897 it was worse and prices had gone to the devil (drug stores could undersell us), and 1900 saw the death of the bicycle business as an exclusive proposition, at the age of ten years. By that time we were all bankrupt and everybody that could, whether manufacturer or retailer, returned to his former occupation. The making of bicycles was carried on by factories with other lines, the selling of them by the sporting goods and department stores, and the price of a good american machine went to about $50.00. The english machine had been driven out of the market.

The advertising moral is this: quantity production had been induced by demand, improvements and reduction in

price by competition. Advertising had nothing to do with any of it. Makers had never used it particularly for distribution outside of trade papers, except perhaps the Pope Manufacturing Company, and retailers (there were no jobbers) only when competition became keen and the market overstocked and demand at current prices ceased. Then advertising should have stepped in and saved the day. Alas, no amount of it did a particle of good in bringing buyers unless accompanied by a reduction of at least 50% in price of some standard machine; in other words, unless one could advertise a real bargain.

One manufacturer, when the debacle began about 1897 did try to make people bicycle nationally by bedeviling the country along trunk railroad lines from Maine to California with "Waverly Bicycle" signs; dictionaries however never adopted the word "waverly" for bicycle and his factory disappeared, along with the Columbia brand, as easily as those that never spent a cent for boost.

A much more interesting subject of speculation than the part played by advertising in the development of the industry is the part played by the tariff. Had the english safety been allowed to come in free and had no protection been afforded our makes, their development would have taken place just the same, been slower, hence better, and the whole business would have been kept on a more wholesome and durable basis (eventually meeting english competition) without everybody that touched it getting his fingers burned. Only responsible and well established factories would have gone into it; the tinkers, amateur mechanics, blacksmiths and small machine shops all over the country could not have afforded to.

Today the best bicycles are still made in England and France. In 1911 french country shops afforded me a far better choice of machines than could be found in America. European countries never went through the short-lived sporting craze over the safety that characterized its introduction here. On the other hand its use there by mechanics and workmen, farmers, market women and small trades people is universal today. The "american standard

of living" however brooks no such economy; in the United States limousines are the standard vehicle prescribed in working circles. For must we not live up to our "prosperity" at all costs?

Mr. Calkins does not claim for his profession the creation of bicycles; they are not mentioned in The Truth about Advertising. He is not, however, so modest concerning the automobile:

"But consider the motor car," he says, "nearly every one is interested in *this product of advertising.* Nearly every one is aware of the steady lowering of price due to quantity production."

Here is the advertising imagination stretched to its limit. Does anyone remember being first introduced to an automobile by advertising? Does anyone remember buying his first of these marvelous, new, horseless vehicles because of an advertisement? Does anyone remember that they were ever advertised, other than competitively, at all? Did Henry Ford have to use advertising to distribute his? Does Mr. Calkins really believe advertising had anything to do with quantity production of Fords or any other make? Could quantity production of them have been *prevented* by anything under the sun? I guess not. One might as well point to Stephenson's locomotive and railroads, Robert Fulton's steamboat and ocean greyhounds, the telephone, wireless, radio, aeroplane as publicity's children. The motor car a product of advertising! The idea is nothing short of childish.

Presque tout le monde (sauf peut être notre illustre Decoré) sait que l'automobile est un produit de la France; voilà pourquoi chassis, limousine, garage, chauffeur, détour, Monsieur Calkins.

"The carriage as we know it was a slow evolution. In the course of time it acquired a pattern which satisfies us and which we feel is the happy and logical shape of a carriage. But it had a thousand years for its evolution. In less than twenty-five years the automobile has gone part of the way from an ugly machine to something more nearly approaching good design. And the influence that is bringing this about is the artist who creates the

advertising—the necessity for the product to live up to the advertising."

A very unlikely story! What happened is more likely this; at the start manufacturers did not bother about design at all, did not have time—in too much of a hurry to get the carriage going without horses. So they took the carriage body as they found it and adapted it as best they could to the needs of a motor driven vehicle. Its proportions were very ugly. We missed the horses, it was too high for its length. But gradually, like everything else, it has been improved by experimentation, not advertising. In general line and plan we see the coach, coupé and landau evolved into motor cars which took the designs of horse drawn vehicles where they left off. Mr. Calkins loves to put his cart before the horse but will have to unhitch; catalog advertising took place after the event, not before, and it was and still is generally photographic.

ADVERTISING A GUARANTOR OF QUALITY.

Continuing Mr. Calkins dilates upon the value to society of advertising as a guarantor of quality and the good-faith of the advertiser; to me the most bunk-ladened claim pressed by his profession.

"The necessity of living up to his advertising lifts the manufacturer to new levels, and so we arrive at another byproduct of the effect that advertising is having in raising the standards of business. And this applies not only to the aesthetic appearance of the goods but to business practices and standards. A business which advertises, which puts its name before the public and puts its trademark on the goods, has entered into a contract with the public, with its customers. It must live up to that contract. It must make good. It is in honor bound to justify the advertising. It has given a hostage to fortune."

Admirable advertising rhetoric. Because it ought to be, hence it must be. Has any customer ever seen a copy of this "contract" that advertisers have entered into with the public? In whose keeping is it? Is any bond mentioned

to insure fulfilment? A contract without a bond is of doubtful value. Or does this contract exist entirely in Mr. Calkins' fertile imagination as I suspect? Another question: How are we to know which advertisers are "in honor bound to justify their advertising" and which are not? Both kinds can advertise and both can fool all of the people some of the time, but how distinguish between them? They are not labeled.

"A hostage to fortune." What does it mean? Bacon says: "He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to Fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises either of virtue or mischief." That is, if he accomplishes anything great in life it will be in spite of his handicap of wife and children. So with a business that advertises; if it makes good it will be notwithstanding its advertisements. That coincides with my experience that vociferous advertising of virtues not infrequently means that the article in question is conspicuously wanting in just the very virtue it claims to possess; and the boost is a hypnotic influence to make purchasers think black is white—a kind of smoke screen to befuddle their sensibilities.

All cigarettes irritate the throat more or less according to the susceptibility of the throat. "Not a cough in a carload" can probably be counted on to beat all coughing records. But who cares? "Smith Brothers will take the cough out of any cigarette" and Life Saver makes a specialty of that kind of drop too. On with the dance! Lucky Strike and Old Gold put the cough in, Smith Brothers and Life Saver take it out, Mr. Calkins does good business with all of them and the public pays the piper.

If strenuously advertised articles had half the virtues claimed for them they would sell themselves in a short time without advertising. The fact that they never reach that point but have to be continuously and definitely boosted is proof positive that they are not what they claim to be and have to rely on new customers—new suckers—to keep them selling. For getting your money's worth and being sure of what you get let me take my chances every time with the unadvertised articles.

ADVERTISING THE CUSTODIAN OF ART— "A HUMBLE PICTURE GALLERY."

Speaking of the advertising pages of magazines and newspapers, Mr. Calkins says:

"If such work is good art and well produced, as much of it now is, advertising becomes a humble picture gallery for millions who never see the inside of an art museum."

I wish Mr. Calkins had given us a list of what he considers the best masterpieces in his humble picture gallery. Is that high-toned canvas "Halitosis or Bad Breath" by Listerine, on back cover of the Atlantic for September, 1927, one? The Atlantic, America's greatest high-brow magazine, is of course a "by-product" of advertising without which it could not exist, says The Truth about Advertising. As one of the "millions" who patronize these humble art galleries I feel, none the less, that I am paying a pretty high price for having my mind improved by the Atlantic. The alluring halitosis dancing picture, hung by the Atlantic on the line, featuring theories about bad breath and its cause and cure in order to sell listerine, is undoubtedly the truth about advertising, but what kind of taste in art does it inculcate?

There is, however, another picture gallery of Mr. Calkins' imagination of much more importance than his magazine gallery which, after all, no one need walk through who does not want to, as it is a comparatively easy matter to tear out magazine advertisements—try it. I refer to the gallery, space for whose pictures has been stolen from the peoples' field of vision along the public highways and byways, the gallery that no traveler whether by train or auto can escape, for its canvases are hung upon the face of nature which advertisers and advertising men are blind to. What does our art lover say about this?

"But let us admit that the poster board and its more offensive brother, the painted bulletin, are frequently eyesores, blots on the landscape, offensive to sensitive people" *but* the "movement" to better them is coming: "The company that now controls most

The Chef-d'oeuvre of the Atlantic's collection

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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of this outdoor advertising is making it a part of its policy to erect neat and attractive stands, to place them where they will not mar the scenery."

Evidently Mr. Calkins is not "sensitive." The sensitive person, let me say, does not brook even neat and attractive bill boards in his landscape pictures and they are not only *"frequently* eyesores" to him, they are *always* such, and the "movement to better them" does not move him at all nor does the place exist within his field of vision "where they will not mar the scenery", for a picture comprises everything within one's field of vision. One of the first principles of painting or photographing a landscape or picture of any kind is to show a good foreground without which no picture can be anything but a failure as a work of art. So the art schools teach. We will indeed exhaust every manoeuvre to avoid a ruinous foreground in our picture, likewise detour forever to avoid a continuous advertising foreground in our field-of-vision along the highways.

Our idea of an humble picture gallery is the country roadsides, woods, fields and streams which to business men, as we know, are just so many waste tracts to be bedeviled with boost signs for their personal profit as soon as possible. And when such profits are used to buy expensive canvases which sometimes ultimately are given or bequeathed to art museums then those business men are acclaimed patrons of art, qualified connoisseurs and public benefactors—albeit their means to this end was the desecration of nature and ruination of landscapes that did not belong to them.

"BY-PRODUCTS" OF ADVERTISING.

According to The Truth, when a railroad traverses a district of scenic beauty it gives the passenger a by-product in his journey:

"So advertising is aware of the opportunities of making itself more attractive while not jeopardizing the ends at which it is

aimed. Such results may be called the by-product of advertising." (!)

A beautiful idea, if not subjected to analysis which I cannot refrain from doing: First, then, what is a by-product? The dictionary defines it as something *produced* in addition to the principal product. A railroad's principal product is transportation. It takes an advertising mind to see scenery as a by-product of producing transportation; but that is nothing to what the same mind sees as the by-product of advertising! Advertising has no *principal* product that I've been able to find, let alone a by-product. It cannot be said to produce anything save pollution of the public field of vision. It is not concerned with production at all, only with consumption. Advertising produces, if you will, *itself*, i.e., signs, billboards and reams of uninformatory printed matter, empty boost, solemnly styled "messages" and "stories" by advertising literati. Mr. Calkins says its "physical properties are composed of picture and text and both have had for some years careful consideration by minds trained in good taste." And *in making them more attractive,* he locates a by-product of advertising! Our scenic nightmares have been improved—what more do we want? Good sophistry, but unconvincing.

I never knew that minds could be "trained in good taste" anymore than in musical genius. Minds are born *with* good taste or they live and die without it. Advertising has debauched the public taste, leaving it callous and indifferent to the ugly and blind to the beautiful. Publicity is in the saddle riding roughshod over good taste. While on this subject let me list a layman's conception of society's returns from advertising, its real by-products:

1. National glorification of *Publicity* and *Boost.*
2. *The modern newspaper:* the unwieldy monstrosity—child of the printing press—devoted *mostly* to low-brow diversion and perverting, essentially futile, reading matter of no informative value. A thief of time and destroyer of sensibilities. A desecrator of

the nomenclature of city streets and localities whose names, characteristic and commemorative of the past are changed at its behest for Boost's sake:

Long Acre to Times Square.
Vesey Street to Telegram Square.
Grove Street to Journal Square.

(Bunk as usual: none of them squares at all)

3. *Intellectual debasement* of magazines to accommodate the advertising collar they wear and extravagant over-indulgence in publications and printed matter—"the printed word".
4. *Elevation of quantity* above quality production.
5. *Size, not merit,* the public's standard in everything.
6. *Desecration* of *architecture.*
7. *Uglification of landscapes,* roadsides and the public's field-of-vision wherever chance offers.
8. *National indifference to waste.*
9. *Thriftless habits:* cigarette, shopping, chewing gum, sweets, vanity outfits, face idolatry, automobiles.
10. STIMULATION OF EXCESSIVE NON-ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY, hence HIGH COST OF LIVING.

To glorify publicity is to deny and crucify privacy. A people dead to privacy is dead to individuality, the stuff leaders are made of who make the world go round. To feed Publicity's maw, the Press, advertising's chief subsidiary, hunts down Privacy with inquisitors and packs of hungry camera-hounds. No human act from birth to death escapes. No human situation, sacred or profane, is immune, precedence being given to the criminal, ugly and vulgar in life. Presidents taking the oath, ministers marrying, baptizing and burying, judges condemning to death, criminals on way to scaffold, brides to the altar —all halt at the reporter's command and pose for the camera and are shot for the glorification of Publicity. This outstanding feature of up-to-date american culture is called Freedom of the Press. It bespeaks a boundless freedom to invade the home and strangle Privacy but none whatsoever to tell the truth about advertising, which

would be contrary to the ethics of good business. In apposition to the foregoing shall be set Mr. Calkins' closing lines summarizing society's returns from advertising as he would have us see them:

"The actual public benefit of advertising is that it creates a rapid interchange of commodities and money, producing what we know as good times and, by effective distribution, brings within the easy reach and at easy prices the vast number of articles with which we live and which make life less difficult, smoother, more restful, more efficient and more worthwhile."

Advertising economics are always to be found in the thirteen-year-old class where they naturally belong. For the sake of practice let us have a look into the idea, which Mr. Calkins loves, that rapid interchange of commodities and money (he means rapid *exchange* of commodities *through* money) produces good times. Again he puts the cart before the horse. Rapid exchange of commodities and labor is the *effect* of good times not the *cause.* Could good times be accounted for so glibly as that, in order to banish bad times and create and prolong indefinitely good times, it would only be necessary to advertise indefinitely and there would never be any such thing as bad times again. As in Mr. Calkins' parable of A, B and C, the first shots would break up the "inertia" of bad times, then all the other letters of the alphabet would open fire and suddenly we would find ourselves rolling in prosperity that could never end. Unfortunately for this theory, although we advertise infinitely *now* to eat, breathe, sleep and perform every act of existence, we know that good times *do* end and that bad times occur periodically; some other theory must be found. Those trained in political economy (Adam Smith, Bagehot, Mill) suggest that the cause of good times is population (demand) getting ahead of production (supply); when this point is eventually reached in a period of bad times, capital which had been idle steps in and hires labor, likewise idle, to produce. Thus labor gets money wherewith to buy commodities of all kinds which it has been without, a "merry exchange" is started and behold Good Times!

Bad Times are caused by the reverse, i.e., production getting ahead of population, supply of demand. As demand slackens production does likewise and unemployment begins. Less money is paid out for wages and less is spent for commodities; the glut of these disappears but slowly and goodtimes are frequently a long while in coming back.

Now what are the "vast number of articles" to advertise which we spend annually the vast sum of one billion and a half good american dollars to "make life less difficult, smoother, more restful, more efficient and more worth while," i.e., a perfect advertising hell?

Our attention is particularly called to from five to ten brands of the same cigarette, ditto the same chewing gum, cough lozenges, gum-drops, chocolate candy, cheap crackers, toothpastes, soap, soap dishes, soap bubbles and super soapsuds, innumerable coffee slogans (same coffee), breath and body deodorizers (attention of dancing couples), complexions for young and old, men's collars (guaranteed all alike), indigestions made safe and enjoyable, hair grease for mother's darling boys, children with puffed cheeks yelling for more puffed cereals, et cetera et ad infinitum et inferno. It comes high but is easily worth the money. Nevertheless, is it not cruelty to children, obliged to look ecstatic, healthy and happy over horse slices of dry bread, punk crackers and milk, and a new inflated, vastly overrated cereal 365 days in the year? We know any redblooded child would loathe all this unappetizing food and jump out of the picture and smash the advertiser in the eye if it had the chance.

SELLING THE CHURCH TO THE POPULACE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The great accomplishment of advertising in the field of art is, as we have seen, very seriously on Mr. Calkins' mind: "Even more remarkable has been the record with art", he says; it began no less than five hundred years

ago, according to the following paragraph, his final one on the subject:

"The commercial artist is extinct. He has disappeared. The men who produce advertising art are the men represented in the art expeditions. There is no longer any distinction, and no stigma attaches to art used for business. Artists realize that advertising offers them an opportunity as great as any in the world today, not merely to be well paid for their work, but also to realize their artistic ambitions, without sacrifice of their standards or their ideals. There is nothing essentially debasing in art applied to a purpose."

No paragraph in the article offers a more congenial field for comment. The artist has my warmest congratulations in that advertising now guarantees him a good living. For no artist without living means, independent of his art income, can give the world the best that is in him. No artist who is obliged to *sell* his art for a living can hope to produce anything inspired solely by his own taste and feeling. He is obliged to produce what will *sell;* that is, the art that is dictated by the taste and liking of the public, and we all know this is generally, if not always, the poorest, most ephemeral of art. Business success and art success are incompatible and the one can never measure the other. "What the public wants" and what will sell is seldom what a painter's genius or talent produces if unfettered by business considerations. Had what would sell, hence pay, been the criterion of geniuses in literature and art the world would never have had a single masterpiece.

Was the imagination of Greek architects inspired by good business when they built the Acropolis? Was Shakespeare considering commercial success when he wrote his plays? Franz Schubert starved to death because he could only compose according to the dictates of his inspirations. He died young; his works however are very much alive today. Had they been pot boilers, his physical existence might have been easier and lasted longer, but his musical genius would never have come down to posterity. And the immortal Beethoven, master of the greatest musical intellect the world has ever known, sacrificed

his life much the same way. His late quartets, composed towards the close of life and representing perhaps the last word in instrumental music of all ages, are only now really coming into their own, beating the moderns at their own game. They were not written to give the public what it would buy—his public called him a madman. The life of a genius whose art purpose remains always true to the best that is in him is bound to be tragic unless he inherit an income or be endowed. So I find it extremely difficult to believe that artists (worthy of the name) "realize their artistic ambitions" or ideals by doing advertising work; pictures mostly of flaming youth (undressed females predominating), men sneezing, coughing, writing, and children stuffing food; still lifes of beefsteaks for cigarettes, luscious fruit for chewing-gum, candy, eats of all kinds; canned goods and delicatessen spreads with mayonnaise, spinach and boiled egg, Fisher's rye bread, ham, mustard and cheese, pumpernickle and franks, ketchup and plum puddings, chocolate goo-bars ad nauseam.

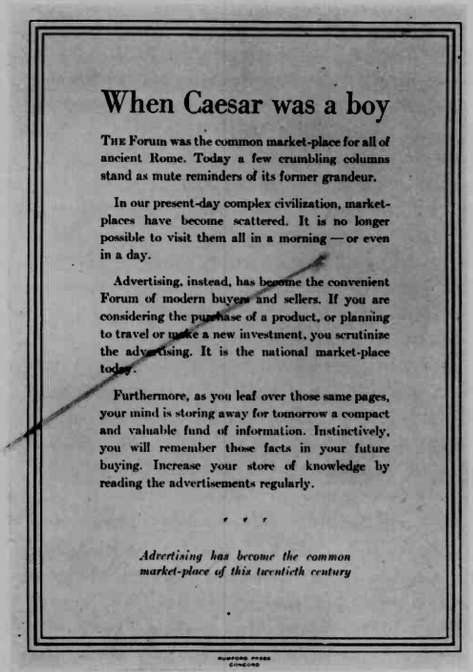
"The great pictorial art of the world, the art of the fifteenth century, was applied art in a strict sense. Those altarpieces, triptychs, murals, depicting the mysteries of religion and the lives of the saints that adorn the churches of Italy, France and other Catholic countries, were applied art. Commissions were given to the artist by the church or by some wealthy prince, subject to certain restriction and limitations; but within those limitations the artist found it possible to express himself and produce a work which is preserved, not because of its primary purpose,—that of selling the Church to a populace which could not read—but because even under those conditions the artist produced great art."

Naturally the advertising mind thinks only in terms of selling. Thus the primary purpose of the great pictorial art of the fifteenth century was "that of selling the church to a populace that could not read"! Well, if advertising the church to the people was what they were after, those prelates and rich princes did not know their business or they would have filled the churches with painted wooden images, doll-house shrines and tawdry idolatrous junk of all kinds, such as we find today in all old catholic

churches—god help their divinely beautiful interiors! The murals of a Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo appealed to the populace no more, probably, in the 15th than they do in the 20th century and there is no evidence, so far as I know, that the rich princes who commissioned this pictorial art in those days were thinking of anything but appeasing their god, saving their souls and gratifying their innate love of the beautiful at the same time.

When the best art in the world, especially religious art, flourished times were emphatically autocratic and the real patrons of all the muses were the aristocrats and the Church. Since France and Italy have fallen on democratic days their monuments are akin to those of our civil war, their public architecture often not far above New York's old post-office and the interior decoration of their churches and cathedrals the product of factories and an uncultured priesthood, reflecting unquestionably the popular taste in art of all ages. Mr. Calkins' appeal in behalf of his client for credit, theoretical or otherwise, for the pictorial art of the fifteenth century must be respectfully denied. We cannot grant that "its primary purpose" was "that of selling the church to a populace that could not read." This rhetorical accounting for the mosaics and frescos of ancient churches, so characteristic of advertising phraseology, was doubtless not meant to be humorous, nevertheless it excited our risibility exceedingly. Devitalizing advertisements and the advertising subject generally is an absorbing intellectual sport and I regret to have come to the end of the game with The Truth about Advertising. There is, however, other challenging material of the same kind everywhere and before writing a conclusion to this treatise I am tempted to prolong the pastime with two distinguished samples of *advertisements of advertising.*

Let homage to advertising's position in the world of Belles Lettres first be done to the classical composition that appeared in the Forum magazine for August, 1928, which I reprint below with commentations.



When Caesar was a boy

THE Forum was the common market-place for all of ancient Rome. Today a few crumbling columns stand as mute reminders of its former grandeur.

In our present-day complex civilization, market-places have become scattered. It is no longer possible to visit them all in a morning — or even in a day.

Advertising, instead, has become the convenient Forum of modern buyers and sellers. If you are considering the purchase of a product, or planning to travel or make a new investment, you scrutinize the advertising. It is the national market-place today.

Furthermore, as you leaf over those same pages, your mind is storing away for tomorrow a compact and valuable fund of information. Instinctively, you will remember those facts in your future buying. Increase your store of knowledge by reading the advertisements regularly.

* * *

Advertising has become the common market-place of this twentieth century

Supposing him to be alive today, let Caesar comment on paragraph one:

"A market place is where buyers and sellers meet—the one to see and buy, the other to display and sell. When I was a boy the Roman Forum was never used for that purpose. It was a place for public speeches and discussion, and where the law courts and public offices were situated. There I delivered my last speech: Et tu Brute?"

Market places always were and still are scattered, just as towns and cities are scattered. No one could ever visit them all in a morning or a year.

The Forum was a *place;* there are none such in existence today. Advertising is not a "place" convenient or otherwise, much

less a place for discussion. It is a sellers' competition in boost-language to hoodwink people into buying.

Oh where are "those same people", where those "facts"? For the unalloyed purity and smugness of its bunk let us mark this paragraph 100.

. . . . . .

A "common" marketplace of this or any century is inconceivable. Marketplaces exist everywhere, regardless of centuries. Stores, not advertising, have largely taken their place in the 20th.

A FEW SOFT ALTRUISTIC WORDS FROM THE FIFTH AVENUE BUS.

"Where can you read advertisements more pleasantly than in these buses. They carry a message to you—for your good and also for the benefit of the advertiser. The advertiser pays a very low rate per 1000 to tell you his story, thereby increasing his volume of sales and decreasing the cost of merchandise to you."

Since you ask us, and are doing it for our "good," we answer put them up where we cannot read them at all. We shall lose nothing thereby, for the "message" you say they carry is never delivered, and the advertiser's "story" about decreasing cost of merchandise to us is a story indeed.

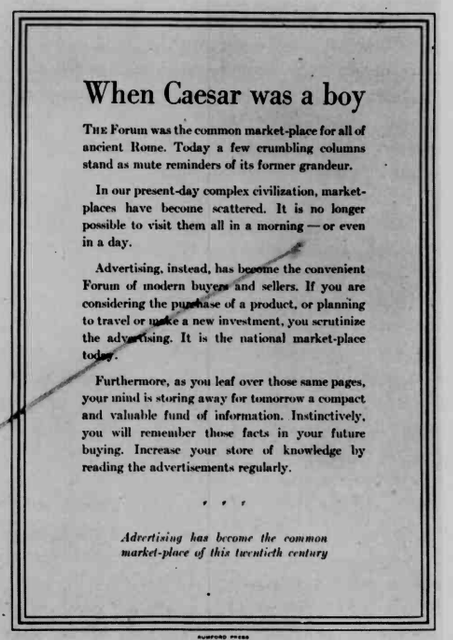
"MESSAGES"

to

Readers of dreary boost

Fair Hostess, employ this touch of Magic.
One triumphant course saves many a meal.
Chew Dentyne and smile.
Sweeten it with Domino.
Don't broadcast a sneeze, cough or cold.
New York has found its favorite Cake.
Don't be a trillium.
It's toasted.
Shaving is smoother the small-bubble way.
You wouldn't eat a green apple.
Every little Coffee Bean has a meaning all its own.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE



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Fair Hostess, employ this touch of Magic.
One triumphant course saves many a meal.
Chew Dentyne and smile.
Sweeten it with Domino.
Don't broadcast a sneeze, cough or cold.
New York has found its favorite Cake.
Don't be a trillium.
It's toasted.
Shaving is smoother the small-bubble way.
You wouldn't eat a green apple.
Every little Coffee Bean has a meaning all its own.

Reach for a Lucky, not a sweet.
Eat a chocolate and light an Old Gold.
Finally and generally
let your object in life
be to—
Eat more of everything,
Chew gum all day long (become a ruminant),
Smoke cigarettes from the cradle to the grave.

QUERY

How many million dollars of advertising does it take annually to keep the American people chewing gum? How many to keep us smoking cigarettes? Eating crackers? Wearing collars? How much of our scenery must we devote to the great Selling Force for these uplifting ends?

PUBLICITY AND NEWS.

In the profession, publicity generally means getting a client into the papers—on the front page if possible—by having him do or say something sensational which the papers will take notice of in a generous manner. Thus the client receives lots of free advertising. Everybody whose occupation thrives through being constantly in the public eye will do or say anything to get on the Front Page.

Publicity is also a generic name for advertising; it is a more dignified sounding term and is common in the best circles now. It is indeed on everybody's lips, young and old. Babes drink it in with their mother's milk, boys get their hand in soliciting ads for their school papers; collegians, misses in their teens, will explain you the advertising theories of distribution and quantity-production as fluently almost as our leading publicity man.

It has become a cult like religion—there are publicity schools, and courses to expound the doctrine as there are

divinity schools. No first class college now without advertising in its curriculum. Students with a skin-deep use of words are attracted by it—the mentally lazy to whom as a profession it looks like easy money. And the graduate gifted with a suave style in sophistication does not generally have to wait long for a job.

The publicity cult calls for rigid standardization. Everybody must dress, think, act, look, like everybody else. The same tastes in everything, the same houses, streets, towns, the same mental processes and reactions, the same low-brow standards. Publicity abhors individuality as the devil does holy water, and parents warn their children against individualism as the outstanding characteristic of undemocratic and unamerican high-brows.

"Given enough advertising the public can be interested in anything—especially the American public already so standardized, so herd-minded that it is timid about doing or wearing or liking anything that is not endorsed by the crowd."

This quotation is from no less an authority than the author of The Truth about Advertising. It is from another Atlantic Monthly article by him, "Gnats and Camels, the Newspaper's Dilemma" which appeared in January, 1927.*

Mr. Calkins says the newspaper's dilemma is how to use all the publicity stuff that pours into them which has news (i.e., circulation) value, without presenting the subject of the publicity with specific free advertising of his business. To me this is not their real dilemma and constitutes no situation to worry about; it strikes me in fact as of no great commercial importance to anybody: the newspaper, the subject or the public. The real and very, very serious dilemma of newspapers is, I would say, how to save from total loss their one-time reputation as reliable chroniclers of events and worthwhile information. How to redeem the quality of their news, well-nigh riddled with worthlessness since they devoted themselves, body

*Note: From the same series as The Truth about Advertising. His book "Business the Civilizer," recently published, includes all the articles, I believe.

and soul, to the creation and sale of advertising space. For the inevitable consequence of that step was the obligation to popularize, to the limits of sensationalism, their news columns by increasing the quantity and decreasing the quality thereof. We know sensational, misleading reading matter circulates better than any other kind. Newspaper devotion to it recently shocked even New York's Police Commissioner. Mr. Whalen was quoted as saying at a public dinner held at the Hotel Pennsylvania, April 12, 1929:

"There was an astounding piece of publicity in the newspapers this week—the trial of a night-club hostess. Of all the disgusting pieces of publicity it beats them all. Why should we put such a person on the front page of all the newspapers to glorify her?"

Why? Because, Mr. Whalen, it sells the papers—is the most popular subject of the reading public and means big circulation, an essential requisite of the advertising business. The Contributors' Column of the Atlantic for January, 1927, introduced us to the Newspaper's Dilemma article with the following words:

"The advertising psychology of the newspapers is a peculiar thing. They will mutilate a news story to avoid a specific mention of advertised goods and on the same page present millions in publicity to another industry. The distinction between news and publicity is one which editors face daily, but which few or none can decide. Remember the space given to the Dodge stock, Valentino, and the Prize Fight and see what Ernest Elmo Calkins, a pioneer in advertising, has to say."

What he says about these examples of newspaper inconsistencies in printing publicity news is very entertaining and true, every word of it. But as this practice shows up the least important phase of the effect of the advertising business upon newspaper character I shall not take space to reprint it here. Those of my readers particularly interested in this side of the question should look up the entire article in "Business the Civilizer." I am, however, reprinting from the second paragraph of "The Newspaper's Dilemma" something which treats of present-day quality-deterioration of news, due to the

demand for advertising space, which Mr. Calkins calls a newspaper's by-product but which I would say had long since become its *principal* product.

"A newspaper is a business conducted for profit. It may have ideals, but so may brickmaking. It has only one product that sells at a profit, and that is space. Actually it sells two products—newspapers to readers and space to advertisers. Originally the real source of profit for a newspaper was its readers. Advertising was a by-product. But as advertising increased in volume and the demands upon the newspapers became greater, the time passed long ago when a newspaper could support itself on subscriptions. Today a copy of a newspaper, whether sold for two, three, or five cents, costs more to produce than the sum the reader pays for it. The deficit is made up by advertising, and the profits all come from advertising. This has led to securing circulation primarily for the purpose of selling it to the advertiser, which, of course, has a profound influence on circulation methods, and has induced most newspapers to step outside of their legitimate field of presenting the world's news according to its relative importance, and to add feature after feature solely for the purpose of securing additional circulation—circulation, mind you, which is sold at a loss. Particularly has it led to playing up those aspects of the news in which the public is supposed, rightly or wrongly, to be profoundly interested.

Sex, crime, and sport are featured with pictures, headlines, special articles, interviews, and other devices, until they overshadow the real news, but sell more papers to Mr. Mencken's two largest groups, Boobs and Yokels. When the legitimate news value ends and the event is spotlighted beyond its importance and desert, it becomes exploitation. And exploitation of either enterprise or individual in a position to cash in on publicity furnishes extraordinary instances of the newspaper's generosity with free advertising."

Mr. Calkins, like everyone else, speaks of news as though it had a definite existence independent of the newspaper. To think of it as such is a popular fallacy. "News" is essentially a newspaper product—to wit, reading matter based on whatever journalists elect will best sell their papers. It is what we find in the paper—what newspapers give us, what they print, and they are under no obligation to publish anything else. Is it not useless therefore to complain because they do not print or attach importance to what we call "legitimate news," "real news," "world news," etc., which exists only in our imagination? News has no tangible existence until it appears

in print in a newspaper. The Century Dictionary etymology of the word news, the plural of new, is that its idiomatic use came as a translation from the French nouvelles. The Dictionary calls absurd the etymology (common on the screen now) that describes news as being "information from the four quarters of the compass"—N E W S, north, east, west, south. Though plural in form, news is singular in use. It is defined as a new or uncommon and more or less surprising thing; a new or unexpected event or occurrence.

The first and paramount obligation today of the publisher of an established daily newspaper is to secure advertisements, for that is his real business. To accomplish this he needs to fill the space not taken by advertisements with news, i.e., reading matter and pictures that will sell his paper. The matter need not be of any important, enlightening or fact-telling character, provided only it be diverting and written in a story-telling style, and the possible truth is that 75% or more of news (what journalists fill space with, which is the obvious definition of news now) is indeed barren of any useful information or intellectual value. It is a depressing mass of items of political and social gossip, crime, scandal, accidents, police records—the ugliest, most degraded doings of mankind predominating—collected at great expense from the four corners of the earth, "storified" in slovenly newspaper english with much repetition and redundancy (according to the space to be filled), of necessity thrown together in great haste, and printed with a negligible modicum of important fact, regardless of order or the reader's convenience, on large, unwieldy sheets—this is news, a newspaper product which the public is said to "demand." Demand? hardly. Buy?—yes, with avidity.

To read news is worse than a waste of time for it debases rather than elevates the mind, filling it with inaccuracies (or untruths) on every conceivable subject, and prevents the growth of inclination for reading that requires an effort, however, slight, at concentration and thought. Indeed the vast majority of people buy news-

papers (the only literature indulged in), not to be made to think, but for momentary diversion, as they buy chewing-gum, or light a cigarette.

In the selection and display of news the importance to society of any human occurrence is of very minor value indeed compared with its diversion power for the masses. Hence news is for the most part composed of inconsequential, very low-brow nothings.

For news purposes pictures make the best copy; expressing no definite ideas themselves, and, illustrating only fragmentary and primitive reading matter, they can be easily digested with the minimum of mental effort, hence their rapid increase in popularity for supplying news fodder that slaves of the newspaper-habit will buy and greedily devour.

TYPICAL EXAMPLE OF THE KIND OF PUBLIC OPINION THE NEWSPAPER-HABIT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR.

Newspapers live on crime; it's their biggest seller. Facts about the crime itself are soon exhausted, but opinions, gossip, sensational and misleading headlines about it are inexhaustible. The longer a crime is in the courts the better for the papers. The Vanzetti-Sacco case was a gold mine. For seven years unsubstantiated, irrelevant and factless news about it could be published by the ream and find a ready market. It is upon this reading matter that public opinion, as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, was mostly based, not upon the facts brought out at the trial nor the jury's verdict which were soon disregarded and forgotten. In fact, it was the 'newspaper trial" spun out for seven years, not the real trial, that was responsible for the strong and generally wrong convictions on this case, held by all classes of newspaper readers—convictions that led to disgraceful exhibitions of mob violence against the United States in many Italian communities the world over. Everybody had an *opinion* about it,

not from having been present at the trial (the only possible source of correct information), or reviewed the evidence, or heard witnesses first hand, or talked with jurors—but from having pored over news and pictures about it for seven years. Although entirely incompetent and knowing really nothing themselves, newspaper readers did not hesitate to pronounce the judge "unfair" and to voice most vindictively their "feeling" that the men were innocent. Such was the "public opinion" (created by the newspapers) that cried out against the execution of the sentence passed upon the defendants after their trial, held absolutely in accordance with the laws of the land. This public opinion did everything in its power to defeat the ends of justice and discredit the government. No act of Vanzetti's, the avowed anarchist, could possibly have shaken our faith in government so much as would have the failure of the government to enforce its own laws by not executing this sentence. It would have been a pitiable confession of the weakness of our democratic form of government, and fraught with anarchy.

Hail to Advertising's Greatest Byproduct
Newspaper Public Opinion!

ADVERTISING NOTWITHSTANDING *PROSPERITY* RECEIVES A SEVERE JOLT

The republican idol Prosperity was nearly shaken from its pedestal in the Temple of Business, known as the White House, by the Wall Street crash in November 1929. It appears our Great God had been ill for some time, although we did not know it, for the secret had been carefully guarded by all the party chiefs from Mr. Hoover down.

Prosperity had been the watchword, rolled over the tongue like a delicious morsel, in every presidential speech, since the business infidel, who had desecrated the Temple with ideals for 8 long years, was driven from the sanctuary by the republican hosts of 1920. There followed

the business orgy of a decade, unparalleled in the nation's history.

The publicity cult swept the country and the High Priests of Advertising sat on the right hand of the President. The people—exhorted, whipped, pursued to buy and spend as never before—let themselves be driven to the market places like sheep and responded lavishly, whether they could afford to or not; "deferred payment merchandising" made it easy for them. To be thrifty and not spend unnecessarily was unpatriotic, was to be a tight-wad and laughed to scorn. Does not the american standard-of-living, forsooth, call for extravagance and waste?

They bought Florida land, and stocks, recommended as get-rich-quick speculations, and when their savings were exhausted they borrowed and mortgaged and bought more and still more automobiles, and stocks on margin, inflating prices to the bursting point. The chief magistrate of the nation looked on approvingly, gave them his blessing, and continued to proclaim prosperity with each public breath, as had his predecessors Harding and Coolidge.

There were many warnings prior to November 1929. Perhaps a dozen times in two years the front page had recorded sensational drops in the stock-market and Babson predicted an inevitable crash sooner or later. But each time the market reacted, generally making new high records, until we all got to believe in an inexhaustible reserve of buyers always ready to rush to the front and take stocks off everybody's hands at no matter what ridiculously inflated prices, whenever selling became dangerous.

But suddenly one day sellers seemed to greatly outnumber buyers—they were not there—for what specific reason no one knows, but surmising is easy: speculators both big and little had come to the end of their resources for carrying stocks and needed to realize. Stocks were offered down, tentatively at first perhaps, but, as takers became harder and harder to find, it soon became a sauve-qui-peut market—a landslide, a crash—until speculative inflation, from which the market was suffering, had been thoroughly squeezed out of prices and they again reg-

istered more nearly what properties were worth as income yielding investments. The process, however, was expensive and doubtless ruinous, directly and indirectly, to many pockets. And then it leaked out that the Great God had for some time prior to the stock-market debacle, been suffering from "buyers' strikes" and cautious purchasing on the part of the public—the orgy of spending was over and unemployment was said to be abroad in the land.

The situation worried the Guardian-in-Chief of Prosperity not a little, so he came forth from the Temple and proclaimed that the Great God was never better in his life, guardedly admitting, however, emotional symptoms of undue "pessimism, fear, and hesitancy in business" which if allowed to feed on themselves would create difficulties. The *consuming power* of the country to consume the non-essentials, "luxuries and semi-necessities," was threatened. Fear (of having to economize?) was knocking at the doors of "millions of homes"! And then the President said: "These are potential difficulties which cannot be cured with words. . . . The cure for such storms is action; the cure for unemployment is jobs."

But oh Mr. Hoover, what cure-all but "words" are you giving us now? Do not we all know that if jobs *were* to be found there would be no unemployment? If they cannot be found it is because they do not exist—that is, business for the moment must have all the workers it can profitably employ owing to slackening of demand for production, and an employer who *made* jobs for the unemployed for charitable, not business reasons, would soon be "jobless" himself! It simply is not done, Mr. Hoover, in sound business circles. Government officials are the only ones who can *make* jobs regardless of business reasons and not become jobless themselves, for they do not have to make their own jobs *pay* and can, (proverbially do), run up big deficits for their employer with no fear of ever being called to account; chances are all in favor of their being reelected just the same.

National governments, states and cities can spend huge sums in order to give work to the unemployed, but that

is not helping business any—it is *not* business—it is only robbing Peter to pay Paul, and it is a fair guess that not one of the great business leaders called into conference by Mr. Hoover to listen to his "words" of good cheer and utter "words" themselves, went away from those conferences intending to spend a dollar in his business that he was not going to spend anyhow, or that would not be called for by good business reasons.

Will Rogers' "conferences restoring confidence" with Texas Guinan, Clara Bow, Elinor Glynn, Fanny Brice and Aimee McPherson were funny, very, but Mr. Hoover doing the same with Railway Heads, Financial Magnates, Farm Interests, Four Hundred Key-men of Industry and Julius Barnes, Chairman of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce was a scream!—despite the solemnity of the situation.

Poor old Business was told by one and all, in pretty plain language, that he was only playing sick and to take up his bed and walk, and walk fast too—walk in a circle —even if he didn't get anywhere, for Prosperity was threatened and with it the prestige of the Republican party.

A powerful amount of "confidence" was instantly revealed (in all newspaper head-lines) and a big noise like business reverberated from coast to coast—business à la Hoover-plan!

So I followed the news carefully at that time, November and December 1929, to find out just what his plan was. First and last it seemed to provide for a prodigious amount of language and opinion about business conditions. Everybody was to go into "conference" on the subject. Committees, councils big and little were to be formed, surveys made. Mr. Julius Barnes, chairman director of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, was made generalissimo of this talk campaign. His motto: business on even keel hereafter under a permanent stabilizing procedure, sounded the key-note for a chorus of four hundred key-men in business, established to loosen key-log of jam and foster trade under Hoover's plan. "Trade" (in metaphors) at once became brisk; news opinions and interviews

bristled with optimistic predictions and hopes couched in well guarded metaphorical language.

It was *indicated*
It was *agreed* that next year's business would be
It was *predicted* equal to this year's.
It was *stressed*

December 4th Congress assembled. The President, having heard plans to spend two billions for public works, declared business sound and his "plan" became operative.

By November 21st Chairman Trigg, of Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce, had told the Conference that a "prosperity *reserve-pool*" of work to meet the needs of the present situation was already *under way* in that city. By November 23rd Lieut. Governor Lehmann (New York State) had pointed the way to *guard* prosperity. Urged generous credits (of other people's money?) and stressed thorough *analysis*. He *indicated* State will speed building program to *stimulate* industry. To consumers he declared that this was no time for clutching purse-strings in sudden *economy*. To do so, he asserted, would be "bad psychology, bad business and bad morals". No wage cuts, no *lessened buying!*

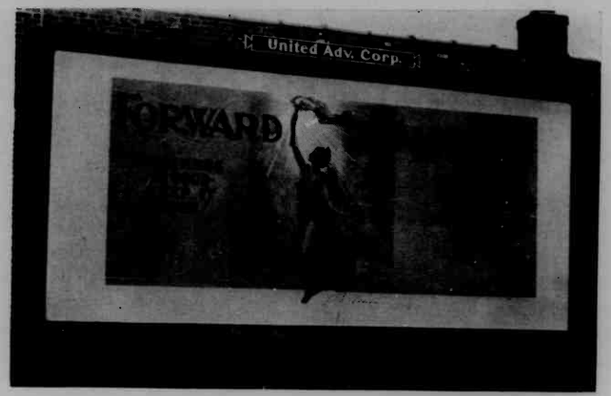
The interview of other governors, by the New York Times, elicited the expression of kindred sentiments. November 21st, United States Chamber of Commerce heads said Hoover parleys revealed strength of *business fabrics* —emphasizing lack of weak factors. Problem of *momentum* was to be solved by *balance-wheel* of *stability*. Field Marshal Barnes spoke guardedly as follows to the Times:

"At the meeting it is hoped that *suggestions may* be made, with regard to *courses of action* which both business and government *may* take to *sustain business* through the immediate future and over a *longer period*".

From my study of the news on the subject as found in the papers I gathered that by, "to sustain business," was meant, to keep 'em buying at any cost! From Henry Ford, however, came the only practical business announcement to this end on November 21st, when he foretold a general

pay-increase to his employees, and subscribed to the general conviction that the real need in the present situation was to increase the *purchasing* (i.e. spending—not saving) *power* of the people. Evidently this would certainly sustain the business of the selling-people, whatever it might do to the business of the buying-people!

It was to be expected that the principal ingredient of this revolutionary economic prescription for our threat-



The first gun of the Hoover campaign to restore confidence and "Keep Business on an Even Keel"

ened business depression would be BILL BOARDS, to proclaim the Gospel of Boost. The cheer-leader would first of all organize a cheering-squad.

We had not long to wait for this message. On December 14th, 1929, in Montclair, I photographed the first harbinger of our business renaissance, to meet my eye. Here it is above, a clarion call to all buyers to sacrifice themselves. Its appealing note was heard all the way on my subsequent journey to Los Angeles, California. Alas, I needed to "clutch the purse-strings in sudden economy"!

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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THE FORWARD AMERICA SIGN DISSECTED.

This contribution of boost to the business discussion inaugurated by Mr. Hoover, is amazing evidence of the nation's faith in signs, and belief in "messages" from the unseen advertising world.

Who sponsored this sign and paid for it? We do not know, for it is anonymous; but is it not natural to suppose it was the President and his advisors, Mr. Barnes and the United States Chamber of Commerce? "Business is Good—Keep it Good!" What does it mean? If business is good why the necessity of a sign saying so, and if it is not good, what can a sign do?

The dictionary defines the word business (amongst other things) as buying and selling—trade in other words. Every business transaction requires two parties: a seller and a buyer. If either is wanting no business takes place (can take place) and no property changes hands, and it is obvious that both buyer and seller will come together only according to the laws of supply and demand, which laws, obviously too, must determine the health of business. From the nation's passion for signs one would suppose we considered that the publicity cult had changed all that. Alas no. Supply still controls the number of sellers, demand the number of buyers.

Business is Good—Keep it Good! The more one ponders this slogan of the United Advertising Corporation (for scenic bedevilment!) the more meaningless it seems.

Which of the two parties is expected to *keep business good?* The seller cannot do it if the buyer will not or cannot *buy,* and he certainly should *not* buy if he does not need or cannot afford to. Only a bad business man would do that and only a fool would buy for the sake of keeping business good for the seller. So we must conclude that this advertisement has been concocted and paid for directly or indirectly by sellers, as they alone can benefit from business that does not keep itself good naturally, or, what seems most probable, conclude that business is really *not* good, that buyers are scarce (not enough of them to go

round) and that this advertisement is nothing more nor less than a republican call for volunteer buyers to sacrifice themselves for the Administration that stands on nothing if not good business prosperity!

POSTSCRIPT JULY 1ST 1930.

During May and June the stock-market has resounded with further crashes and recrashes, "crashing through the low levels established last November" on June 24th and business is reported getting no better fast. Oh republican buyers, where are you?

Here is a suggestion for ye High-priests of Publicity: To appease your angry idol, Prosperity, stage a procession from the White House to the capitol carrying your icon-sign, Forward America. Let the icon bearers be President Hoover, Mr. Barnes, United States Chamber of Commerce heads and United Advertising Corporation officials.

IN HOC SIGNO VINCETIS!

CONCLUSION.

It has taken many long centuries and many revolutions to down mankind's belief in hereditary government and the divine right of kings. The United States ship-of-state jettisoned those ideas before ever being launched, but it looks now as though it might take something not far short of another american revolution to get us out of the advertising hell we are in, the natural outcome of our publicity-worship.

The american government? "That's me," says Business, "touch a hair of my head if you dare." Our laws, in effect, say this to Business: "They, the public, are your goats; when you get them corraled milk them dry and let advertising be your milking machine. Lest some of them escape you by hiding in their homes the government will

aid. Through the mail they shall receive annually tons of your "printed word" at reduced rates. Postal deficit therefrom the goats shall be taxed to pay—likewise the expense of incinerating this printed trash shall be on them." As we know, american business has availed itself of the privilege with both hands and both feet. The corrals are the public places of all kinds which the goats must frequent, where they must congregate—stations, cars, roadsides, streets. Here we find the milking machine working day and night—Mr. Calkins' machine "for making it easier to live the way we now live."

What-ho a leader, a Mussolini, to rouse the goats, march on Washington, oust Business from the President's Chair and make our public field-of-vision safe from pollution and exploitation!

Land ownership—exclusive right to a certain piece of the earth's surface by an individual—is the outcome of man's social life, without which it would be nonexistent. Laws governing this practice should therefore safeguard society's interests equally with those of the individual to whom is granted this great privilege; society, which engages collectively to protect the individual in his right of eminent domain, should first protect itself from all consequences therefrom prejudicial to its own interests. Our code fails very seriously in this respect; it recognizes, for instance, no such thing as affront to and infringement of the public's aesthetic rights, consequent upon the use of private property for advertising display, and the realty owner, besides exclusive possession, enjoys also exclusive control of the view of his land that society must endure. Now view of the land is a factor in the situation common to everybody with eyesight and cannot be eliminated by private ownership of the land itself; nevertheless such ownership carries with it the legal right to traffic in this factor for private profit. Laws protect society from the pollution of the water that runs through and the air that blows over private property, but no laws protect society from the pollution of the view of such property. What is built there, what the public must see there, what use or

neglect the land is subjected to, are all matters that concern seriously the community as a whole and should be under greater state control.

The most flagrant exemption from this control is the practice of deriving income from land, buildings and franchises by farming out advertising privileges. This includes all outdoor advertising and all such as is now permitted without legal restriction of any kind in public conveyances and public places. In permitting traffic in the public's field-of-vision for private gain, the State sanctions robbery of what is the people's inherent right, when in public places, to freedom from unsolicited advice as to the spending of its money. The function of advertising is to influence the public in favor of the advertiser that he may profit. It is exploitation of the public's susceptibility to the influence of almost any advice, when sufficiently forced upon its attention through printed or pictorial reiteration. The value of this advice can in no way be measured by the extent of its reiteration which is determined solely by the advertiser who, as a highly interested party is entirely disqualified as a trustworthy adviser.

A State not in the possession of business but free to legislate impartially in the interests of all classes would enact laws protecting buyers from the licensed public-soliciting of sellers, to-wit laws:

Prohibiting advertisement on land or buildings not owned by the advertiser unless the business advertised is itself located there,

and

Prohibiting advertisements in the public conveyances and stations or on the property generally of all companies whose charters and franchises as common carriers and public servants are not specifically granted for or to include advertising purposes,

finally laws

Against government subsidies of advertising through preferential postal rates on newspapers, publications and circulars by reason of the advertising they carry.

Such laws would protect the people's spare cash from untoward public attack and its field-of-vision in both town and country from boost pollution. They would insure our peace of mind from affront when on recreation and travel bent and confine advertising to its own grounds—newspapers and publications which can be purchased and read or not as seen fit. They would make it easier to live the way we want to live which (be it said), is *not* advertising's way.

The only commercial advertising I am willing to concede to be of economic value is that of trade and manufacturing publications which is addressed directly to producers and distributors who really need and consult it. The rest, addressed directly to consumers and without informatory value, I agree with Stuart Chase in classing as a tragic economic waste, fraught with debasing cultural consequences. It could, in my opinion, disappear tomorrow and society as a whole be the better off.

While waiting for laws that will lift the curse of outdoor advertising from our civilization I urge taxation of the practise as the next best remedy for the sign and billboard evil.

ENCOURAGEMENT FROM NEW JERSEY AND THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII.

Since the major part of these pages was written and as I am about to go to press in 1930, news reaches me of New Jersey's enlightened step. At their last session her lawmakers saw a great light and decreed that advertising signs of all kinds shall pay a state tax of three cents per square foot of display. This is the first state, so far as I am aware to recognize billboards as a social evil and dare to tax them. I am proud of my citizenship.

HAWAII.

When in Honolulu recently I was amazed to find no advertising signs anywhere in evidence, although prosperity and commercial success were pronounced, in this fast growing american city, and the counters of her shops were as well able to take care of our wants in every particular as the worst billboard-infested city in the United States. Nor was the country-side of the island of Oahu sign-bedeviled either. At last here was relief for the "sensitive" motorist from the relentless persecution of business and it was an *enormous* relief. The same relief was experienced in the island of Maui whose beautiful rural scenery and fertile roadsides were likewise entirely undefaced by outdoor advertising which, if I am not mistaken, is taboo everywhere in the territory of Hawaii, and for this blessing we must thank the Woman's Circle of Honolulu.

I was particularly impressed by the restful pleasurableness of motoring in Hawaii, following immediately after three months spent in California (described by Mr. Calkins as the motorist's paradise, I believe) where they feature statuary as well as pictures in their roadside publicity. The Richlube filling stations there have added, to the Humble Picture Gallery, effigy monuments to the automobile racer Mr. Richfield—or is it Mr. Lube?

Illustrated Guide for a Stroll
through
THE HUMBLE PICTURE GALLERY

Always Let *Spending* Be the First Act of *Saving*

TOOTH PASTE STARTS BABY'S *Bunk* ACCOUNT

Doubtless a posthumous advertisement by Lewis Carroll for Alice in Wonderland. If Baby ever realizes this wonder she will be luckier than Alice. Like advertising messages that are never delivered she will find this deposit was never made. Her parents spent it long before they ever bought the Listerine, discounting the economy as soon as they grasped the idea

ONLY UPPER-CLASSMEN OF GREAT INTELLECTUAL CONCENTRATION MAKE THIS TEAM

The enormous cultural advantages of a college education are here illustrated. They graduate past-masters in cigarette indulgence and ardent votaries of the american god Publicity, fundamentally equipped for careers of indolence and to earn easy money as testimonialists

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

Always Let *Spending* Be the First Act of *Saving*

Tooth paste starts Baby's bank account with a $3 deposit

Sounds strange, doesn't it? But it really isn't. Figure it out this way: by using Listerine Tooth Paste at 25¢ the large tube, instead of ordinary dentifrices costing twice as much, your average saving per year is $3. With this $3 you can open a savings account for your youngster. Or you can buy yourself gloves, or hosiery. There are countless items to choose from —the choice is yours.

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ONLY UPPER-CLASSMEN OF GREAT INTELLECTUAL CONCENTRATION MAKE THIS TEAM

Yale men decide which is best cigarette

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Literary By-products of Advertising

New Jersey's famous all-lake route to the Boonton Hills. Lakes with every modern convenience—water, boats, bathing, fishing—all to be visited and enjoyed in a morning's run without getting out of your car. Due to Advertising!

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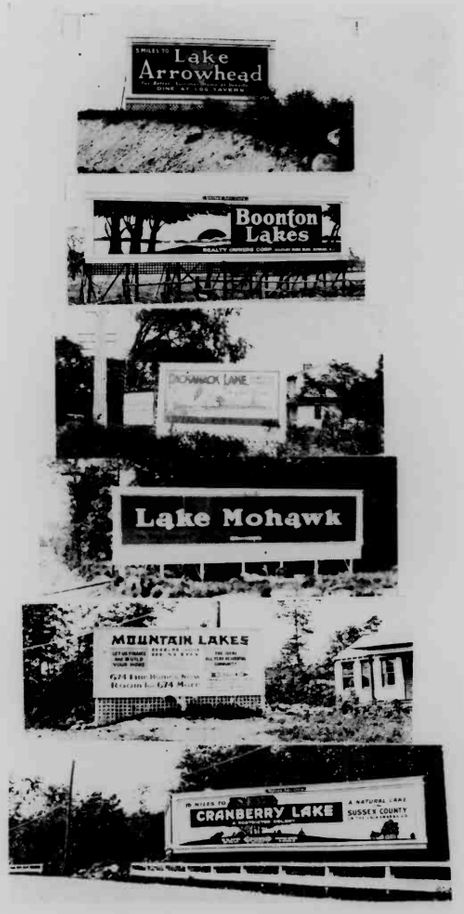

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Publicity makes strange bedfellows. Here is New Jersey's largest bank hobnobbing with the Ingersoll Stropping Outfit on the Mendam Road, both out for business by the same methods, regardless of the scenery. We used to associate banking with more dignity and better taste in advertising. How the great have fallen!

All signs bedevil the country-side. Standard Oil out-bedevils other advertisers by reason of the number, size and hideousness of its signs. Every consumer's reaction to their existence should be to forget Standard Gasoline when in need of gas. Were not the majority of American motorists supinely indifferent to advertising uglyfication of their roadsides Standard Oil signs would be starved to death; the remedy is in our own hands. They are particularly offensive exhibitions of competitive brand-advertising. By no stretch of Mr. Calkins' economic imagination can they be justified

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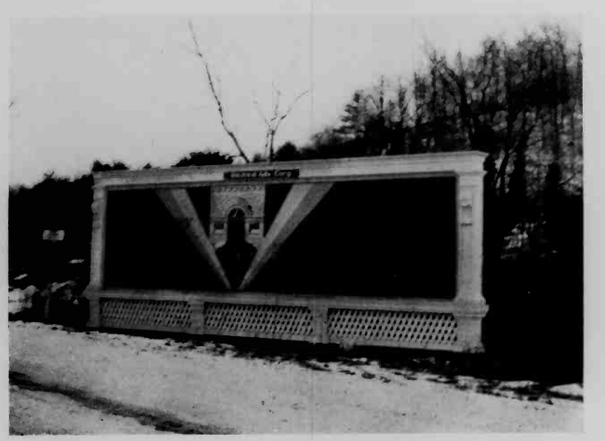

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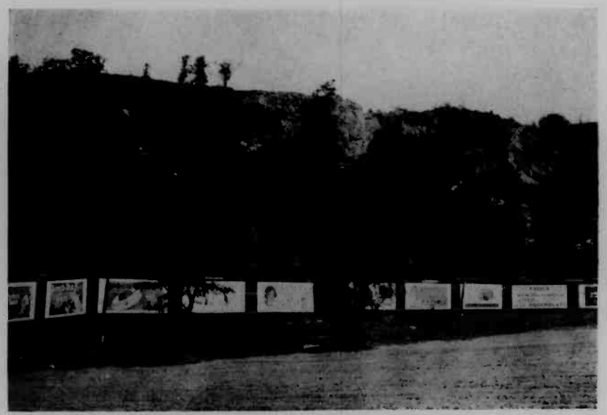
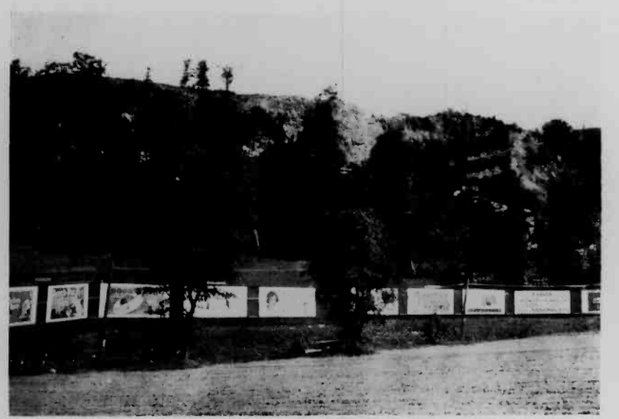


The gallery's choicest exhibit of country roadside scenery showing foreground of "improved" signs

What we send our daughters to Vassar for

Flaming Youth

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE



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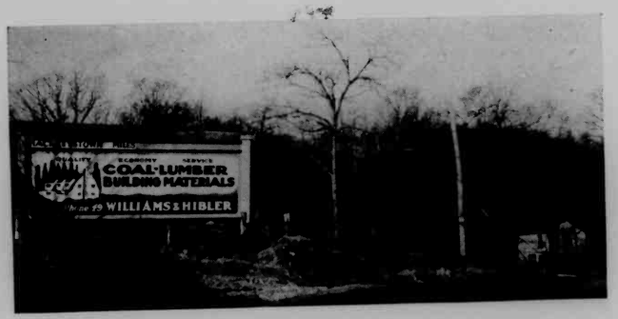
Cliff Decoration—by Bamberger



Down

Up

What local boost has done to the romantic glen on Schooley's Mountain

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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Up

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PORTRAITS OF NATIONALLY ADVERTISED
AMERICAN CELEBRITIES

The 100 Percenter

Our all-around wag and chewing-gum testimonialist

The Van Todd twins—Flowers of the roadside

MUNICIPAL ART IN NEW YORK DURING
THE REIGN OF KING BOOST

This masterpiece of municipal art depicts boost dressing architecture. The architects say ginger ale is not a proper setting for the Public Library. Clicquot Club says who cares for the Public Library? We want publicity and the public wants libations, not books, which is doubtless true enough. There is a great deal to be said on both sides; let art commissions look into it

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The companion picture to the foregoing, completing the Library's setting, is this one. Here the boost is mixed which is typical of New York municipal art. The observer should stand at 40th Street and look up the city's proudest and richest avenue to vision the Library and its setting at its full valuation

The Bush Terminal tower, one of the most beautiful in the city, is here shown in a life and death struggle for art value with Business, the ruthless destroyer of all beauty. If built on the Sixth Avenue corner, hence visible across Bryant Square from its base to its top, this admirable monument to American architecture would score in its entirety. As located however, it rises from a foreground of sordid boost contributed by banking, now cheek-by-jowl with cigarettes and the common herd, in their craze for publicity. Oh, Finance, where is thy one-time dignity!

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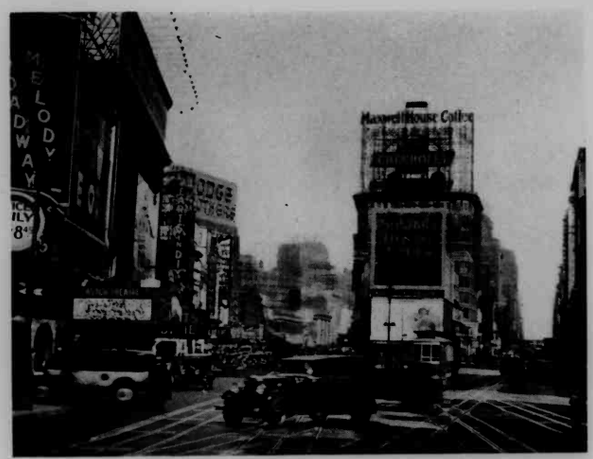
The sign shown below means the distribution of lumber—without it the inhabitants of Madison Square would find no lumber on the counters of "their favorite shop"

Paris has long been called the most beautiful of world cities because she loses no opportunity of fostering municipal art. Vistas through streets, across squares and open places are terminated, not by colossal boost-signs, but by monuments and impressive architecture. From the Place de la Concorde looking north is the Madeleine, east the Tuileries, south Les Invalides, west L'Arc de Triomphe. In New York opportunities for municipal art are seized by advertising and the city acquiesces; hence a lumber-jack climbing a tree is our monument at the parting of the ways that proceed north from Madison Square plaza



When the paint is off the Great White Way

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THE REIGN OF KING BOOST

When the paint is off the Great White Way

Monument to the usurper of Long Acre

A Vista that Advertising missed

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

Monument to the usurper of Long Acre

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MUNICIPAL ART IN NEW YORK DURING
THE REIGN OF KING BOOST

Real Municipal Art. Advertisement-free, it qualifies for Paris but not for The Humble Picture Gallery

INTRODUCING THE SECOND SECTION

Much as my mind abhors outdoor and kindred advertising as a greedy and ugly ogre, preying on the pocketbook and culture of society, the advertisement of ideas in the public press has always appealed to me as having great possibilities for the philosopher bent on contradicting popular fallacies and desiring to speak his mind to society without any consideration but that of telling the truth as he sees it.

With this explanation, I beg to introduce to readers the second section of this book, which is an account of the experiences met with in my first experiment in the advertisement of ideas, published at the time in pamphlet form.

The ideas to which I attempted to give publicity (for altruistic, not commercial reasons) were concerned with the economic wastefulness of competitive advertising. Needless to say my feeble protests were barren of noticeable results. There immediately followed a ten-year period of the most unbridled competitive advertising and consequent spending ever known in the country's history, which was officially proclaimed to be prosperity, and we all practised prosperity madly, buying to the limit of our means and credit, saving nothing for a rainy day, until suddenly we began to lose our jobs, the country rang with unemployment and prosperity disappeared from the presidential speeches.

The second section should have a certain historical interest for readers, for therein Mr. Hoover as Food Administrator, like Mr. Hoover as President, appears with the highpriests of advertising sitting likewise at his right hand.

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Much as my mind abhors outdoor and kindred advertising as a greedy and ugly ogre, preying on the pocketbook and culture of society, the advertisement of ideas in the public press has always appealed to me as having great possibilities for the philosopher bent on contradicting popular fallacies and desiring to speak his mind to society without any consideration but that of telling the truth as he sees it.

With this explanation, I beg to introduce to readers the second section of this book, which is an account of the experiences met with in my first experiment in the advertisement of ideas, published at the time in pamphlet form.

The ideas to which I attempted to give publicity (for altruistic, not commercial reasons) were concerned with the economic wastefulness of competitive advertising. Needless to say my feeble protests were barren of noticeable results. There immediately followed a ten-year period of the most unbridled competitive advertising and consequent spending ever known in the country's history, which was officially proclaimed to be prosperity, and we all practised prosperity madly, buying to the limit of our means and credit, saving nothing for a rainy day, until suddenly we began to lose our jobs, the country rang with unemployment and prosperity disappeared from the presidential speeches.

The second section should have a certain historical interest for readers, for therein Mr. Hoover as Food Administrator, like Mr. Hoover as President, appears with the highpriests of advertising sitting likewise at his right hand.

Advertising Is Non-Essential—

TAX IT!

The Cost to American Society of This Unproductive Industry

By JULIAN R. TINKHAM

"This is the Time for America to Correct Her Unpardonable Fault of Wastefulness and Extravagance."

—*Woodrow Wilson*

Advertising Is Non-Essential— Tax It!

By

JULIAN R. TINKHAM,
Upper Montclair, N. J.

A record of the series of cards which appeared in the New York Evening Post, calling attention to the economic loss involved in competitive advertising, and the patent absurdity of trying to increase the consumption of food and other essentials, the conservation of which the Government was urgently advocating, and particularly to the double waste involved in the extravagant advertising campaigns now being waged, despite the war, to increase sales of cigarettes, chewing gum and other non-essentials, together with some of the correspondence the cards evoked and concluding with a plea for the immediate TAXATION OF ADVERTISING, whose complete exemption therefrom is unwarranted.

FOREWORD

The great agitation started by the Government, as soon as we entered the war, concerning waste and the non-essential industrial activities of the nation, led me to question in this regard, commercial advertising, America's most conspicuous and very characteristic industry, that is estimated to have absorbed in 1917 $300,000,000 worth of precious material and labor.

Its product—newspapers and publications, signs and billboards—confronted me everywhere; but, whereas its gigantic cost was impressive and the profit therein to advertisers could be conceived, my imagination never evolved a satisfactory explanation of its utility to the civilization that was supporting it.

Certainly, so far as my own welfare was concerned, I felt convinced of its almost complete futility and wastefulness, and for similar reasons seriously doubted its functional value to society at large. Yet it was the nation as a whole we were being exhorted and admonished to consider, not individual interests. Non-essential industrial activities (those not producing the primal necessities of life: food, clothing, shelter) were being frowned on and each and every one of us, besides direct waste, was discouraged from buying luxuries and non-essentials, in order, by curtailment of demand, to indirectly force capital and labor into the production of essentials and war-necessities.

Thus I was led (by Government itself) to question what the nation, in contradistinction to the individual, was getting out of commercial advertising, this species of propaganda concerning all sorts of articles, mostly familiar and of everyday consumption, that was being supported with so lavish a hand.

Was it a necessary factor in the distribution of commodities without which human wants would go unsatisfied and trade cease? Just what *would* happen to us should it suddenly disappear? I could not see that anything disadvantageous would happen to *me*—quite the contrary, I foresaw a lessened cost of living and, on my travels, infinitely greater peace of mind.

My point of view was acclaimed unusual but interesting. I saw, however, that it was very difficult for people generally to grasp the idea that there was any side to the question other than the advertiser's or that society might have an interest in advertising that could be paramount to his. The subject was almost universally dismissed and my questions answered with: "Of course it pays. Do you suppose they'd do it if it didn't? It is good business and none could succeed without advertising, &c., &c."

And so, uncriticized and untaxed, this business continued its extravagant practices in direct contravention, it seemed to me, to what the Government advocated: thrift, economy, conservation—for advertising first of all certainly is meant to stimulate consumption and that, too, regardless of needs.

Analysis showed the bulk of advertising to consist of uninformative boasting—boost—about countless familiar articles from the great food staples and necessaries to the luxuries and superfluities of social existence. It could be described as a great bragging contest of competitors to gain trade at the expense of each other which not once in a hundred times was concerned with something new effecting an improvement in life.

The economic effect of advertising must obviously vary with different articles. In the case of flour, for instance, it is not supposable that the total consumption of this basic food is affected at all, although the most strenuously advertised *brand* presumably receives the widest distribution, which then (*not* better or cheaper flour) must be the net economic result to society of supporting a nation-wide flour propaganda.

With tobacco the case is very different; an indulgence, not a food, its consumption is in no way controlled by necessity and may be stimulated to any lengths, which indeed is the only return we get from tobacco-advertising that I can see, it being absolutely devoid of any informatory value.

The Government's conservation and anti-waste campaign contrasted sharply with the inconsistencies of our economic life. Flour was scarce and high but the sale of it continued to be pushed by signs and bill-boards as usual. The Standard Oil Co. solemnly warned us that consumption of gasoline was exceeding production and to abstain from joy-riding, then proceeded to fill full pages of newspapers by the ream telling us where we could buy all we wanted of it.

Coal disappeared from the home hearth during the coldest winter of record but found its way most of the time to the furnace animating New York's super-gorgeous electric sign jogging our memories about chewing-gum.

Oh, dazzling exhibition of consummate industrial wastefulness! Despite the coal shortage I burned with desire to show you up.

Thus it came about that these advertisements on advertising, copies of which follow, appeared over my name in the New York Evening Post. Those who could not distinguish between the advertisement of ideas and commercial advertising that seeks to exploit the public for profit, thought they saw in my course a knock-down answer to my argument. However, ordinary care in reading the cards will easily discover the kind of advertising I refer to, and that advertisements of ideas or of useful information whether commercial or not, or for a specific purpose, are not included in my criticisms. The cards speak for themselves.

They are given in chronological order, together with comment on responses from advertising interests and the correspondence and experiences which followed their publication.

While the Government appeals to the country for increased production of the necessaries and not to waste food or labor. ADVERTISING, THE MOST GLARING INSTANCE OF WASTEFUL EFFORT THAT I KNOW, pursues its extravagant habits unadmonished.

This business I would describe as a monumental burden that we have saddled to the back of our national economic life under the belief that it is indispensable to our welfare. Strange, for the major part of advertising, while increasing the cost of everything bearing its mark, seems to be nothing more than pure boasting, which, if all done away with to-morrow, would probably not lessen the well-being of the community in the least. Only a very small part can be said to give any information that consumers need in order to have life made easier or better.

Advertising is of two kinds: instructive and competitive. The first can be of great value, but the second, the bulk of the business, concerns the community only as it increases costs. COMPETITIVE ADVERTISING is a competition in bragging about the same commodity or article—the attempt of competitors to increase sales over each other, in which the consumer's interest is very obscure.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Nov. 19, 1917.—Card No. 1.

ADVERTISING is part of selling-expense. The price of the advertised article includes its cost and is increased by just so much.

This appears to be the net result to consumers of competitive advertising, particularly of food and necessaries familiar to everyone, whose total consumption by the community must in normal times be nearly constant.

IS ADVERTISING NEEDED TO ACQUAINT US WITH FLOUR, FOR INSTANCE, OR TO ENABLE US TO PROCURE WHAT WE REQUIRE? I question it.

Manufacturers are unable at present to supply the demand for this staple, yet advertising of it continues; the price, now exorbitant, must include this superfluous selling-expense.

Our food-administrator admonishes us to conserve the staff of life. Should he not likewise admonish manufacturers to cease advertising it and save this expense to the consumers?

AND THE EXTRAVAGANT ADVERTISEMENT OF GASOLENE TO INCREASE SALES—IS THIS CONSISTENT WITH THE PRODUCERS' APPEAL FOR ECONOMY IN ITS USE, BECAUSE CONSUMPTION IS EXCEEDING PRODUCTION?

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Nov. 26, 1917.—Card No. 2.

In the Post of Nov. 19, 1917, appeared the first reaction from the Advertising interests as follows:

TO THE GENTLEMAN FROM MONTCLAIR

Advertising is the economic force which decreases costs to the consumer by decreasing costs of production, sales and overhead.

A very striking example of this (though all *real* advertisers have the same experience) is that of a manufacturer of a certain very nutritious food product.

Before employing advertising as a sales force, a package of this food cost the consumer 25c—after the public was sold to the goodness of the product and after the public accepted the product in a big way, the price was *lowered* to 15c and the contents of the package was generously *increased.*

How did this come about? Well, substantially the same overhead charges remained though the business grew 5,000 fold because of the advertising—this alone would take care of the advertising cost, but this is not all.

Installation of marvelous automatic machinery was justified by the enormous growth of the business which advertising is responsible for; and the greatly reduced cost of production would again pay for the advertising *several* times. And *this* is not all!

Before employing the force of advertising, sales costs were approximately 15%—it was hard to sell the unknown article. Now sales costs are about 5¼% including advertising. And as the business runs into the millions—but what's the use!

Hanff-Metzger, Inc.,

ADVERTISING AGENTS

95 Madison Avenue, New York City

P. S.—If this advertising happens to attract a new client for us, watch our production costs drop as well as those of the prospective client.

"And as the business runs into the millions—but what's the use!" No use at all, gentlemen, wasting your time on that side of the story which I have heard many times and believe. It is the other sides that interest me.

This history of a certain food product resembles what has been heard concerning shredded wheat, which was certainly "really" advertised both before and after it became established and whose manufacturers doubtless had a similar experience; so for convenience of argument I assume it was shredded wheat that is referred to.

I find there remain several questions to be answered before we can know the exact return to society from this adventure in advertising. On the surface the return was more shredded wheat for 15 cents than previously for 25, accomplished in a short time. That shredded wheat was a new and good thing deserving of some publicity cannot be denied, but one wonders first to what extent it was important that society should hurry to drop other cereals for it, and second, what great detriment it would have been to society if, no particular propaganda with reference to it having been waged, it had continued selling at 25 cents a while longer. For is it not probable that, its merits being such, in time it would have sold itself up to a point where the new machinery would have been possible and quantity production have brought about a reduction in price anyhow? Or does anyone know that a civilization with this "certain nutritive food product" is materially better nourished than one without it?

Other questions are: When society ran its shredded wheat diet up into the millions what happened to the cereals that were abandoned to make room for it? Was the manufacture, by competitors, of millions of something else given up or were the shredded wheat millions eaten in *addition* to the food society was already consuming? In either case was it a gain or a loss to society? Furthermore: What was the experience of shredded wheat manufacturers with reference to advertising after "the public was sold to the goodness of the product and accepted it

in a big way"? Did they have to *continue* advertising just the same to hold the public to it? Pretty conclusive evidence, if so, that the large shredded wheat diet, stimulated by advertising, was abnormal and not essential to the health of society, which, when not under the advertising influence, got along just as well on less.

In a recent conversation with an advertising authority I was told that shredded wheat advertisements, having been discontinued at the request of the Food Administration since wheat became scarce, sales had fallen off to such an extent that (the rumor was) it would take $2,000,000 of advertising to regain the Company's former business—$2,000,000 of non-essential hypnotic boost to persuade the public to abandon other cereals in favor of former shredded wheat consumption! Here is food for reflection.

ADVERTISEMENTS for a specific purpose, like selling Liberty Bonds, or for introducing a NEW article that supplies a want or saves expense, may be of great value.

Such advertising, however, disappears, or should, when its object is accomplished, and the expense of it ceases.

The public is interested in commercial advertisements to the extent only of the information they afford for bettering life in some way. COMPETITIVE ADVERTISING OF COMMODITIES THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE MARKET FOR YEARS GIVES NO INFORMATION AT ALL ESSENTIAL TO PUBLIC WELFARE.

Increased sales of one kind of food resulting from strenuous advertising, simply means decreased sales of other kinds, as only a certain amount of food can be consumed advantageously. Without ANY advertising the public would still know how to buy what it needed. CONTINUOUS ADVERTISING of countless familiar articles—cereals, crackers, spaghetti, bread, sugar, CHEWING GUM, tobacco, soap, tools—IS FLAGRANT ECONOMIC WASTE FOR IT ENGAGES MUCH CAPITAL AND LABOR THAT OTHERWISE MIGHT BE IN PRODUCTIVE INDUSTRY.

It is probably no small factor in the high cost of living.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Dec. 3, 1917.—Card No. 3.

News Item from The Evening Post:

FARMERS' LACK OF HELP.

Allentown, Pa., November 26 (by A. P.)—"At least 1,000 men will have to be released from the selective draft if Lehigh County is to produce anything like normal crops next year," declared A. J. Hacker, County Farm Adviser, in a statement issued today. Mr. Hacker says farms are being abandoned because of the inability of the farmers to secure help.

Release them from the Advertising Draft!

The country needs more farms—*fewer Signs, Billboards and Publications.*

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Dec. 10, 1917.—Card No. 4.

Advertising is described as a great economic force—by its friends.

The COUNTRY is short of SUGAR, FLOUR, GASOLENE, COAL, FARM-LABOR, and many other commodities. It must relieve this shortage a lot to continue spending millions on this marvelous force whose product is SIGNS, BILL-BOARDS and PUBLICATIONS.

HOW GERMANY MUST SMILE AT AMERICAN WASTE! Also short of food, but not gone mad over advertising, she still feeds her people and armies without spending millions on our great ECONOMIC FORCE.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Dec. 17, 1917.—Card No. 5.

To MR. GARFIELD,

Fuel Administrator.

SHOULD THE COAL-WANTS OF EXTRAVAGANT ELECTRIC ADVERTISING SIGNS take precedence over the coal-wants of the people?

CHEWING GUM ELECTRIC LIGHT PEACOCKS AND FOUNTAINS seem to be disporting themselves the same as though coal for domestic use were not dangerously scarce.

The community better be deprived of these gorgeous free exhibitions of economic force before fuel for heating gives out entirely.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Dec. 24, 1917.—Card No. 6.

To Mr. Hoover,

Food Administrator:

WHAT THE COUNTRY WANTS IS MORE AND CHEAPER FLOUR, **not signs and billboards telling us about flour.**

We know all about flour and we can't eat signs and billboards.

Please advise manufacturers to drop them from their menu and serve us in their stead flour at a reduced price.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Dec. 31, 1917.—Card No. 7.

In an endeavor to get an expression of opinion from the Food Administration on the subject of food advertisements in the present crisis, I addressed Mr. Hoover the following letter which was not replied to.

New York, January 2nd, 1918.

Mr. H. C. Hoover,
Food Administrator,
Washington, D. C.

My Dear Sir.—

May I be permitted to call your attention to the enclosed clipping from the N. Y. Evening Post, addressed to you, (7) as well as copies of similar advertisements on the same subject that have appeared weekly. I would particularly ask you to read numbers 2-3-5 as giving the gist of my argument.

Too much labor engaged in unproductive activities was, in my opinion, the basic cause of the high cost of living in America before the war—a condition that has been greatly aggravated by the war.

I am unable to see wherein society benefits in any way from competitive advertising of well known articles of food or of any kind—it seems to me an entirely superfluous distributing expense. What the individual advertiser gets out of it at the expense of someone else selling the same commodity is beside the question.

The advertisement of food seems to me particularly unnecessary and wasteful at this time. I know you cannot forbid it, but you can discourage it. I would greatly appreciate an expression of opinion from you on the subject.

Yours truly,

(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

To

HANFF-METZGER, Inc.,

Advertising Agents:

PLEASE EXPLAIN what Society (*not* the individual advertiser) gains by spending millions on COMPETITIVE ADVERTISEMENTS of Flour, Sugar, Bread, Milk, Cigarettes, Chewing-gum, Spaghetti, Tooth-paste, Corsets, Pancakes, Overall, Mint-drops, Garters, Soup, Hammers, and thousands of other articles familiar to civilization since the year 1—more or less;

Also

WHAT LOSS, economic or otherwise, Society (*not* the Advertising Agents) would suffer were all these advertisements to disappear to-morrow.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Jan. 7, 1918.—Card No. 8.

To the Gentleman From Upper Montclair:

To sell anything you must have a salesman as well as a buyer. That is self-evident.

Sound advertising is the essence of sound salesmanship. It is demonstrably the only practical force and economic factor to rightly reach and sell to the greatest part of Society as individuals. For Society is the buyer—and Society must know how **best** to differentiate superiority from mediocrity; right from wrong; sophistry from truth; claims from facts.

Millions are being economically spent on 'competitive advertising.'

1. To create a market for superior merchandise or service, by educating Society as to what is superior.
2. To reduce the cost of production, overhead and selling, by increasing output based on added demand.
3. To protect business thus obtained; and to safeguard Society — the buyer — against substitution, inferior goods, piracy and overcharging.

Flour is advertised because possibly about 3% of American Society want the **best.** This advertising—persistently maintained—has done more to elevate the standards of both advertised and unadvertised flour than any other force.

Sugar is advertised not only to raise and maintain quality standards, but to educate Society to conserve fruits and vegetables otherwise wasted.

Bread is advertised to enable Society to differentiate that which is made of pure materials in clean, hygienic factories, from that which is made of unwholesome or impure materials, baked in cellars overrun with vermin.

Milk is advertised for substantially the same basic reasons—cleanliness and assurance of maintaining food standards.

Cigarettes are advertised to enable the consumer to know that "they are the purest form in which tobacco can be smoked."

Chewing Gum to enable people to get a pure, wholesome product, nicely flavored, instead of the gum they used to chew.

Spaghetti is advertised to educate Society as to its nutritive value—an inexpensive food but little known in this country until recently.

Corsets are advertised because Society demands a certain standard of contour for the female figure, and certain manufacturers are confident that they have a superior product.

Tooth Paste advertising has a very definite and important educational value in helping Society preserve and save its teeth.

Pancake Flour is advertised to contribute to Society's gastronomic enjoyment; overalls as a means of economy and preservation of Society's clothes; mint [illegible] add **pure** spice to Society's life; garters —Society wanted something better than a piece of string and didn't know where to get it; soup to provide a nourishing, palatable comestible ready made—saving Society's fuel and time; and hammers to provide Society with a superior implement that can be **recognized** as superior.

We would hesitate to treat Mr. Tinkham's queries seriously were it not for their apparently naive sincerity.

Society itself appreciates the fact that advertising has influenced the sale of Liberty Bonds to thousands of people who never knew what a bond was.

That it has taught and is teaching thrift to millions of people.

That it has persuaded thousands of men to enlist in the Army and Navy.

That it has brought millions of money and thousands of workers into Red Cross Service.

That it had influence in bringing about the election of the present national administration, as we have peculiarly good reason to know.

HANFF-METZGER

INCORPORATED

ADVERTISING AGENTS

95 Madison Ave., New York City

Advertisement in New York Evening Post, Jan. 11, 1918.

Society will need no assistance from me to enable it to "differentiate sophistry from truth" in this gem of advertising literature from the pen of the agents, for *sophistry,* in full advertising force, is nearly the whole thing. There was no space left for answers to my questions.

Society goes to school to advertising: knew nothing about bread, for instance, until it was advertised.

Advertising is a creator and guarantor of quality. "Cigarettes are advertised to enable the consumer to know they are the purest form in which tobacco can be used." This is hard on cigars. What are *they* advertised for? Perhaps they are also the purest form, &c.

Advertising is a *creative* agent. It provided society with hammers which society didn't have before nor could it have recognized them as superior implements had it had them, although hammers were in use in the stone-age!

To HANFF-METZGER, Inc.,
Advertising Agents.

You say: "*Millions are being economically spent on Competitive Advertising* to create a market for superior merchandise or service by educating Society as to what is superior."

COMPETITIVE ADVERTISERS, dear friends, as their name implies, have but one object: to outsell each other, since they are all advertising the *same* thing. Society's education therefrom is extremely obscure, although Society pays their extravagant bills.

Take the great food-staple, *flour*, known to mankind you will concede thousands of years before advertising ever defaced the earth's surface.

Where exists in America to-day, save perhaps in the *advertising mind*, the Society that is ignorant of flour and its use? Education on that score surely is superfluous. Nevertheless, and in spite of its scarcity, *three competitive brands of flour are now being expensively advertised*, each one, of course, as the *best*.

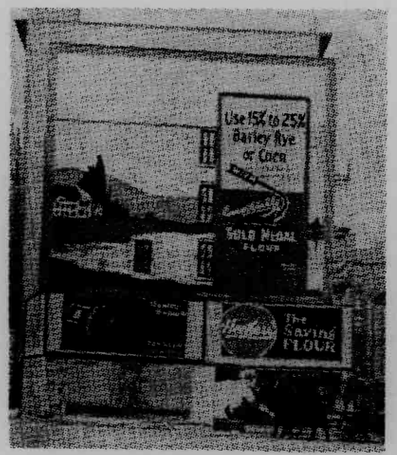
Well, which is the best, oh agents, since advertising tells, even guarantees it?

How know that some *un*advertised brand is not the best? And remember: we can't consume more than one flour at a time.

These queries are put with *naive sincerity*, I assure you.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Jan. 21, 1918.—Card No. 9.



We ask for BREAD and they give us SIGNS!

This beautiful scenic picture (paid for by the consumers of flour) is a product of so-called **economic force.** It shows Competitive Advertising helping out the flour shortage.

The acreage in New York City and vicinity devoted to the production of flour in this way is very large; for the whole United States it must be enormous. Notwithstanding its importance this acreage has been entirely overlooked by the Department of Agriculture.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Jan. 28, 1918.—Card No. 10.

Having received no reply from the Food Administration to my letter of January 2d, I addressed Mr. Hoover again as follows:

New York, Jan'y 29, 1918.

Mr. H. C. Hoover,
Food Administrator,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Pardon my again calling your attention to the economic waste involved in the competitive advertisement of flour, (enclosed copies of cards 9 & 10). I am disappointed at receiving no reply to my communication of Jan'y 2d.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

To HANFF-METZGER, Inc.,
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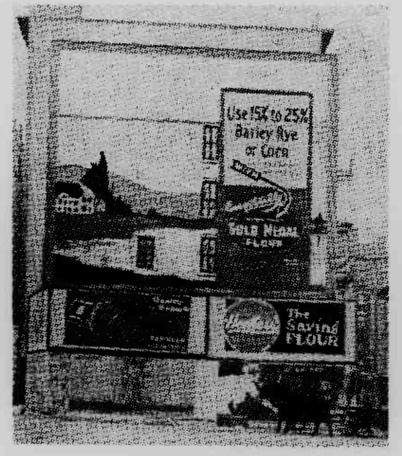

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Yours truly,
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UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Washington, D. C.
January 31, 1918.

In your reply refer to
21-H-GAZ-F.

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham
42 Broadway,
New York, New York.

Dear Sir:

Replying to your favor of the 29th, beg to advise you that we are doing everything we can to discourage the advertising of wheat flour at this time, or anything to give impulse to its consumption.

We appreciate, however, that many contracts have been made by milling and flour concerns that have to be met, but where possible these are being changed over to increase the sale of substitutes, as per one of the advertisements shown on your letter.

Thank you for calling this matter to our attention.

Very truly yours,
UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION
(Signed) By Geo. A. Zabriskie.

Upper Montclair, N. J.
Feb. 7, 1918.

The U. S. Food Administration,
Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

Referring 21-H-GAZ-F, I beg to thank you for the letter signed by Mr. Zabriskie. I do not expect the Food Administration to order the discontinuance of competitive advertisement of flour, nor that the flour companies will leave blank the advertisement space they have contracted for. Economically, however, that is what they ought to do or let the Government use it for their frugality signs. The Food Administration could, however, wield a great influence for the future if it came out categorically against *competitive* advertising of *all* foods as being a totally superfluous distributing expense costing society much and benefiting it not at all. In the present food shortage crisis it is a very important matter. The labor employed in constructing these thousands of competitive food-signs if released to the farmers, would produce a good deal of food.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

Between New York and Philadelphia, along the line of the Penn. R. R. are 120 **large** signs of Gold Medal Flour **alone.** The estimated cost is $10,000, paid for of course by the consumers of flour.

Can they afford it?

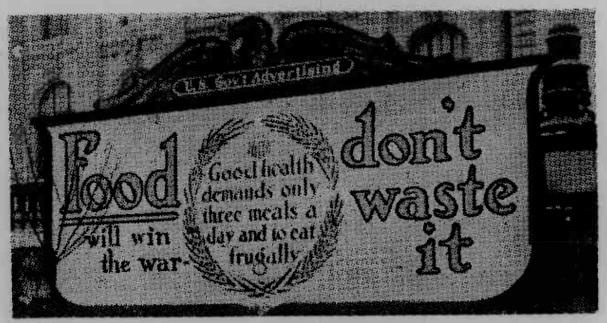
"FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR"
Yes—but Food-Advertisements *won't.*

The labor now employed by competitive advertisers of food, if released to the farmers could produce wheat enough to feed an army.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Feb. 11, 1918.—Card No. 11.

The U. S. Government Trying to Counteract Food-*selling* Advertisements



If issued by an efficient Imperial German Government this sign would read besides:

Advertising of Food *ist streng verboten!*

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Feb. 18, 1918.—Card No. 12.

Cards Nos. 11 and 12 were mailed to the Food Administration without comment and brought forth the following letter:

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D. C.
February 26, 1918.

In your reply refer to
12-H-31/MS

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham,
42 Broadway,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

I have the two clippings pasted on your letterhead, (Feb. 11 and Feb. 18) received by the Food Administration on February 23rd.

I note the illustration Gold Medal Flour displayed along

the Pennsylvania Railroad between New York and Philadelphia.

Of all the food producers, which should not be criticized, it is the Washburn-Crosby Company. The fact is that there is but little ground for criticism on most of the milling companies. They are co-operating very materially with the Food Administration in its publicity campaign.

I am informed that the actual cost for the particular signs referred to, is considerably less than you figure. This, however, is not the point. Washburn-Crosby Company have for some time advertised a reduction in the consumption of Gold Medal Flour, urgently appealing to the American people to use substitute grains mixed with the flour. Not only are they doing this on their outdoor advertising, but they are doing it quite extensively in all periodical and newspaper space that they had contracted for. If you will look at recent Saturday Evening Posts and other publications and watch the development of their outdoor advertising, you will see that they are asking the public to use with Gold Medal Flour 15 per cent to 25 per cent rye, barley, corn, oats, etc.

We have on file here, clippings, reproductions of outdoor display and other forms of advertising in which there is proof that a large per cent of the milling companies are really advertising conservation rather than their brands.

The illustration that you sent us of the bulletin sign is evidently our display on the public Library of New York carrying our general slogan "Food Will Win the War—Don't Waste It." The phrase accompanying this is an appeal to those thoughtless people of New York City who apparently are wasteful or eat too much. The midnight suppers, we think, are wasteful, besides good health does does not demand it, hence statements in this sign that you have photographed.

It might be well for you to get in touch with our Milling Division located in New York City, who can advise you in detail regarding co-operation extended by milling companies of the United States toward food conservation.

We trust that this explanation will forestall any unfair criticism.

Faithfully yours,
UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION.
(Signed) Advertising Section,
Public Information Division,
R. C. Maxwell, Chief.

509 Park Street,
Upper Montclair, N. J.
Mar. 6, 1918.

12-H-31/MS

Mr. R. C. Maxwell,
U. S. Food Administration,
Advertising Section,
Public Information Division,
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:

I take it that you have not seen the other clippings and correspondence sent the Food Administration on the subject of advertising as you comment only on one of my *examples*, not on my argument.

I am taking the liberty of enclosing copies of all my cards which, if read consecutively, will explain my contentions. You will see I am approaching the subject of advertising from *society's* point of view, not that of the advertiser which needs no champion. I am trying to analyze advertising in general, competitive advertising in particular and tell just what it is doing for society, which, you will not deny, supports it. *What economic "return" does society get from the maintenance of this enormous unproductive industry, especially at a time when labor for the essential activities is seriously scarce?*

For the advertisement of flour, the world's greatest staple, I find no excuse at all so far as society is concerned. Without informatory value, it strikes me as a wholly superfluous distributing expense to the consumer affecting only the *sales* of the competitive advertisers, theoretically increasing sales of the biggest advertiser at the ex-

pense of the others. My real opinion is that the *total* consumption of flour is not changed one way or the other by advertising; Washburn-Crosby can well afford to put barley, corn, &c on their signs whose flour-competitive features remain just the same, I notice. Real patriotic concern would wipe all the flour advertisements off the boards and place these at the disposition of the Government for its publicity campaign. Thus would a double economy be effected: directly in precluding the duplication of acres of advertising space—indirectly in the removal of all stimulus to flour consumption.

As you say, the exact cost of those New York to Philadelphia signs is not the point. The point is: what good are they to the flour consumer who pays for them, and might not the capital and labor that maintain them be better employed in a productive industry—raising more wheat for instance? I dwell on flour because by reason of its prominence as a staple and scarcity, it is to me a particularly offensive case of competitive advertising. This argument is fully covered in the card of last Monday, March 4th.

Of course there are many other advertisements of familiar foods that can only represent loss to the community, since they are void of all informatory value. Such are foods the distribution of which *demand* will always effect, without artificial stimulus, like sugar, bread, crackers, spaghetti, cereals, fruit, coffee, &c. It is, however, when the advertisement of non-essentials like chewing gum and cigarettes is contemplated that I am appalled at the economic waste involved, both direct and indirect, and cease to wonder at the high cost of living.

In reproducing the N. Y. Public Library sign, I had in mind besides food advertisements also restaurant advertisements of late suppers. It struck me you were competing with them too; they invite, you discourage. You should be more specific, I think, if you want "those thoughtless people" to take your exhortations to themselves.

Very sincerely yours,
(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

One reason for Germany's economic strength: No enormously expensive Advertising System is needed to accomplish her food distribution. *Her population, acquainted with food from infancy, with marvelous efficiency consumes it automatically when hungry!*

This gives Germany a great economic advantage in war over America, *whose population, afflicted with democratic inefficiency, does not react to food without the stimulus of Advertisements*—a continuous parade of them, announcing food and urging its consumption with pictures, poetry, conundrums and comics!

ARE WE A NATION OF BABIES THAT CAN'T FEED ITSELF—THAT WOULD SUCCUMB TO HUNGER WITHOUT THIS RIDICULOUS AND UNPRODUCTIVE ADVERTISING PANORAMA? ONE WOULD THINK SO.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, Feb. 25, 1918.—Card No. 13.

The foregoing card brought forth no immediate response. But eventually my attention was called by Printers' Ink, "A Journal for Advertisers" of long standing and national authority, to an editorial in that paper of May 23d, 1918, which seemed to refer to me, as its opening paragraph read as follows:

"'Are people such fools that they wouldn't eat unless advertisers constantly invited them to do so?' asks a certain propagandist against advertising."

The editorial's argument is based on the fact that advertising is used to introduce new articles of food or patent preparations of well known foods, which have taken the strain off wheat. But for advertising, the writer contends, it would never have been possible to establish diets sufficiently diversified to keep alive the ever increasing populations of the world which wheat alone (our mainstay) could not be relied upon to do.

The following letter is a copy of the substance of my reply to the article in question which I sent to Printers' Ink.

Upper Montclair, June 11, 1918.

To the Editorial Department of
Printers' Ink, New York.

Gentlemen:

The Editorial, ADVERTISING KEEPS WORLD FROM STARVING, from Printers' Ink of May 23d, to which you called my attention did indeed interest me.

Without going so far as to believe advertising has had much to do with keeping the world from starving, I have never argued against advertisements that introduce an improvement or give 'information that makes life easier or better." But the proportion of advertising that does this is so small compared with what does nothing of the kind, that I attach very little importance to it as confuting my argument that the advertising industry, as developed in the United States, is mostly an economic waste (an incident of competition, a stimulus to excessive non-essential consumption) and so far as the distribution of food and the essentials is concerned, a wholly unnecessary, albeit very expensive, factor.

If, however, advertising has been the indispensable agency described in Printers' Ink, it would be interesting to know how much Germany has used it since the war began, to keep alive her population and armies. I am surprised advertising agents have not given us the figures. Without any inside information on the subject, I would wager a good deal, that the German Government, which controls all the social activities of the empire, has not delegated any appreciable number of its able-bodied subjects to build and paint signs, maintain a colossal output of print-paper, at ever increasing cost, draw pictures and write cheap jingles, to induce its people to use flour and eat bread, crackers, spaghetti, bacon and other strange foods! For I've heard, Mr. Editor, of people when starving, eating even shoe-leather without advertising.

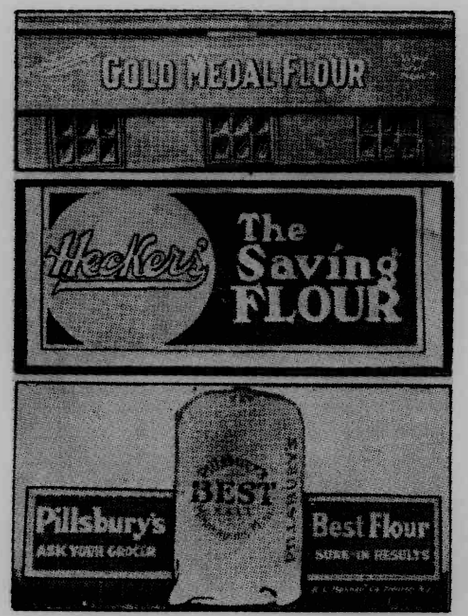
Of course there is the possibility that the secret of Germany's strength has been her *manner* of advertising. Like

as not, with fuel scarce and paper high, she has still been able to maintain her advertising efficiency of a great essential—like chewing gum for instance—without using coal or paper. And perhaps by using prisoners she's found a way in the midst of war, of launching at no cost an overwhelming advertising campaign urging consumption of twenty or more brands of cigarettes, cigars and smoking tobacco, that would make our own war campaign in this particular appear ridiculous. It behooves us to learn her methods if we expect to beat her.

Since reading your editorial I have searched the newspapers and billboards in vain for the kind of advertising described therein, as saving the world from starvation. It may exist somewhere buried under this mass of stuff about shopping, tires, gasolene, tobacco, cosmetics, confections and familiar articles of food or otherwise, but it escapes my notice, and the profuse national advertising during recent years of flour, shredded wheat, crackers and spaghetti, much of which is *still* on the boards—what construction is to be put upon this? A stimulus to excessive consumption of wheat, I would say. It certainly is not recognizable as wheat conservation.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.



FLOUR IS SCARCE and selling at a high price, nevertheless these signs are displayed lavishly all over the country and contribute in no small way to its cost.

Of what benefit or use are they to the flour-consumer who supports them? **None whatsoever, for they are uninformatory competitive advertisements that only contribute to the size of his flour bill.**

Flour is no new thing and there is no danger that it will not distribute itself. **People will always use what flour they can afford and need regardless of advertising.** If the latter stimulates them to use more than they need, that is waste.

High authority says: "Flour is advertised because possibly about 3% of American Society want the **best.**" (Hanff-Metzger Advts., Agts., Jan. 11.)

When I asked which of these three brands **was** the best and why it was not perhaps some **un**advertised brand, there was silence—yes, and always will be to that question **because:**

Flour is advertised by Washburn-Crosby to beat Pillsbury and Hecker—by Hecker to beat Washburn-Crosby and Pillsbury—by Pillsbury to beat Hecker and Washburn-Crosby, and for no other reason.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, March 4 and 11, 1918.—Card No. 14.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

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Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, March 4 and 11, 1918.—Card No. 14.

The United States is seriously burdened with an excess of unproductive, non-essential industry—the basic cause of the high cost-of-living.

The condition existed before the war and has been greatly aggravated by it. Advertising is an important contributor to this situation: directly as an unproductive industry in itself—indirectly as a stimulus to excessive consumption and non-essential production.

Products of the Advertising Industry, involving huge sums, are: *Signs, Bill-Boards* and *Publications*, most of which could disappear to-morrow with great economic advantage to the Nation.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, March 18 and April 22, 1918.—Card No. 15.

CHEWING GUM

America's Great Essential! Inspiring Emblem of Our Civilization, Eating-camouflage to deceive the enemy —what matters it though Bread be scarce?

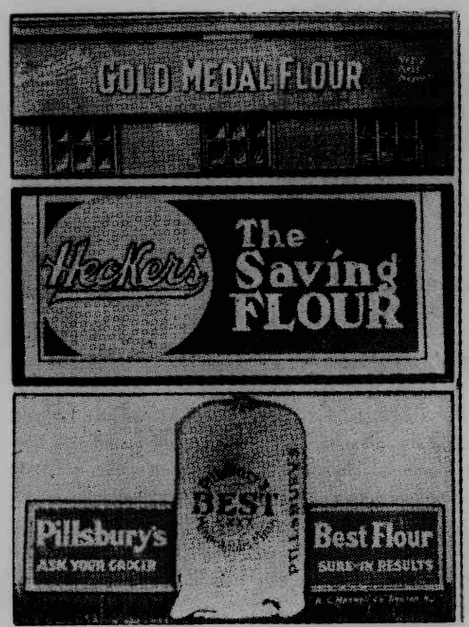
Hail to thee!

Nothing is too good for it. Let its advertisement be fast and furious if it takes our last dollar.

Blazon it to the world, ye $100,000 Electric-light Peacocks and Fountains. God preserve us from a Gum-less day!

JULIAN R. TINKHAM, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, March 25, 1918.—Card No. 16.



These Signs are particularly offensive examples of competitive advertising, because they affect the Staff of Life which is scarce. I challenge the millers and advertising agents to defend their existence and deny my contention that they are entirely without informatory value (it is even unlikely that they advertise the best) and therefore are unnecessary for the distribution of flour, although materially increasing its cost to the consumer.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, April 1, 1918.—Card No. 17.

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Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, April 1, 1918.—Card No. 17.

I give in full the correspondence with the Food Administration which followed the publication of card No. 17.

It shows that I failed entirely in my endeavor to get a direct answer to the questions raised in my advertisement of April 1st—or any information regarding their attitude towards future flour advertising contracts—or an expression of opinion on the economic value of food advertisements in general.

This is not surprising in view of the fact that most of the officials of this bureau appear to be from the ranks of the advertising business.

Upper Montclair, N. J.
April 15th, 1918.

To
R. C. Maxwell, Chief,
Advertising Section,
Public Information Division,
U. S. Food Administration,
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:

I am taking the liberty of calling your attention to my card about flour advertising signs that appeared in the New York Evening Post, April 1st, 1918. I enclose a copy of the card.

It seems to me that either these signs are necessary to the distribution of flour and hence essentially useful to society, or they are not. If they are *not*, then they are flagrant, and under prevailing condition of the food supply, inexcusable *waste*. If my contentions are wrong concerning them and there is a defense for their existence other than as examples of competitive advertising I would like to be enlightened, but neither the millers nor advertising agents have offered to do it.

Am I right in supposing that it is within the province of your department to concern itself with the subject of commercial food advertising which the public, willi nilli, is obliged to support, and may I not ask you for an answer

to the questions I have raised with reference to flour advertisements?

If I have erred in asking this of the Information Division of the Advertising Section of the Food Administration, could you suggest the proper section for me to apply to? I shall appreciate very much this courtesy.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Washington, D. C.
April 20, 1918.

In your reply refer to
12-H-31/MS

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham,
Upper Montclair, N. J.
Dear Sir:

I have delayed answering your letter of April 15, in order to make some inquiry regarding that portion of your card which refers to Pillsbury Flour. I had already ascertained about the Gold Medal and Hecker signs and have now before me information as to the Pillsbury Flour sign illustrated in your advertisement, which is a signed paper to the effect that there are two such signs constructed, one located near Leonia, N. J., on the Erie Railroad, and the other east of Newark on the D. L. & W. R. R., that this contract for two signs was made for three years from September, 1915, and said contract stipulated that the signs were to bear the copy that is now appearing.

I have asked you in previous letter to investigate the statements that are now being painted and printed in the Pillsbury advertisements and in that of Gold Medal Flour and others. You will find that it is strictly conservation message, appeals to the public to use the substitutes with the flour. The general cooperative spirit of the milling companies is to enforce the rules of the United States Food Administration, and further than this, to aid it by lending all the publicity available under their contracts

and otherwise, and put across the Food Administration's advertising campaign.

Your attacks on outdoor advertising are unfair. Outdoor advertising is serving its part in this war, is aiding all the Governmental departments in emphasizing the war needs of the Nation. We have organized all these forces without cost to the Government in order that the money that will be raised in Liberty Bonds may be applied to the purchase of munitions, the pay of men, the construction of ships, and all necessities for the fight we have now with Germany. It would fill a very long letter if I would undertake to outline to you in the briefest way how the Food Administration is organized and operated, which is only one part of the Government's war machinery.

If you are in Washington any time, I would be pleased to have you come in and receive at first hand data and information that will put you right. You are evidently laboring under the wrong impression.

Faithfully yours,
(Signed) UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION,
Advertising Section,
Educational Division,
R. C. Maxwell.

P. S. I am enclosing some printed matter that only partly illustrates the development of the United States Food Administration outdoor advertising.

Upper Montclair, N. J.
May 6, 1918.

Mr. R. C. Maxwell,
Advertising Section,
United States Food Administration,
Washington, D. C.
Dear Sir:

Please accept my thanks for your favor of April 20th which I regret, however, does not enlighten one as to the value of flour advertising to society nor wherein it is necessary to the distribution of flour. In fact the U. S. Food Administration, if you will pardon my saying so,

like the advertising agents, begs the question, which is what I expected.

As to the "conservation message" and advice about substitutes that have appeared on signs since flour became scarce and manufacturers hadn't it to sell, I am of course familiar with them. But this camouflage patriotism may deceive the Advertising Section of the Food Administration, but no one else; any more than does the action of the United Cigar Stores by pasting thrift stamp and W. S. S. advertisements all over their windows, in face of the most lavish and offensive anti-thrift advertising campaign the United States has ever seen for stimulating the consumption of cigarettes.

Of course 15 per cent to 25 per cent rye, barley, etc. on the signs involves no sacrifice to flour advertising whatsoever; that goes on just the same and we can't buy the white without a percentage of substitutes anyhow, by order of the Food Administration, so the consumption of white isn't changed one way or the other—but advertising the substitutes looks well.

As I said in my letter of March 6: "Real patriotic concern would wipe all flour advertisements from the boards and place these at the disposition of the Government for its publicity campaign."

Of course if my contentions are right (and you or any one else haven't said they are wrong), flour should never be advertised *at all.* Can you tell me if the millers are going to renew their contracts when these expire? I would like to know. Would you encourage or discourage it?

You say my attacks on out-door advertising are "unfair"; maybe, but it strikes me that your answer to my letter of April 15 is also very unfair. You ignore my queries entirely and divert the discussion to a defense of Government Advertising, having nothing to do with commercial advertising, and concerning which I have never opened my mouth in criticism. On the contrary, twice I have said as follows: "Advertisements for a specific purpose like selling Liberty bonds * * * may be of great value."

Only in case I have said something untrue about advertising can I rightly be accused of unfairness. Nobody as yet has pointed out wherein I've done this. Can you?

What do you think of the enclosed card on Cigarette Advertising? Is that unfair, too?

Yours truly,

(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

THE ARCH THIEF OF THRIFT IS THE CIGARETTE, whose anti-thrift campaign out-advertises the government 100 to 1.

Smokers are now supporting lavish advertisements of at least 12 different brands of cigarettes, cigars and tobacco. Through no stretch of the imagination is it possible to detect what useful information they convey. THEY ARE THE FORCED DRAFT THAT KEEPS THE TOBACCO-FIRE BURNING WITH EVER INCREASING INTENSITY, DIVERTING, WITHAL, INDUSTRY AWAY FROM FOOD PRODUCTION.

Since 1906 the acreage devoted to tobacco in the United States has increased 77 per cent. In 1916 the land so devoted and therefore withdrawn from food production was 1,412,000 acres. In the last 4 years the number of cigarettes consumed has increased from 14 to 30 billions. A YEAR BEFORE THE WAR WE USED PER CAPITA NEARLY TWICE AS MUCH TOBACCO AS FRANCE AND MORE THAN TWO AND ONE HALF TIMES AS MUCH ... GREAT BRITAIN.

WAKE UP, CONGRESS, AND TAX THE SIGNS AND BILL BOARDS THAT TURN A CONSTANT STREAM OF SMALL CHANGE AWAY FROM THRIFT STAMPS INTO SMOKE, CHEWING GUM AND CONFECTIONS!

TAX THE INDUSTRY THAT PREYS ON THE THRIFT OF THE NATION.

JULIAN R. TINKHAM,
Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, April 15, 1918.—Card No. 18.

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

Only in case I have said something untrue about advertising can I rightly be accused of unfairness. Nobody as yet has pointed out wherein I've done this. Can you?

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JULIAN R. TINKHAM,
Upper Montclair, N. J.

New York Evening Post, April 15, 1918.—Card No. 18.

Card No. 18 was warmly applauded by readers of the Evening Post, but nearly broke the heart of the Advertising Manager.

That it ever saw the light of day in the Post's columns was due to his absence from the office at the time; had he been there when copy was submitted it would have been relentlessly "killed," for the Post's advertisers were objecting—so he told me when I saw him after its publication; thereupon I was delivered a severe lecture on the virtues of cigarette smoking and the futility of mothers trying to curb it (as exemplified by his own case)—on my right to photograph these sacred cigarette advertisements which were the property of the advertisers—on the inspiring sacrifice made by the president of the American Tobacco Co. in going to Washington to work for $1 per annum; "If that isn't patriotism, then by God, I don't know what is!"—on the magnificent spectacle presented by "Business" generally in this crisis in our history and much more not germane to my case, but which showed admirably the sensitiveness of the newspaper mind to criticism of advertising, also that further publicity through the Post for my ideas on this subject would not be made easy.

The cigarette card, offered a second time, was refused and other restrictions were made. Before abandoning my essay with the Post, however, I wrote its publisher. The letter and his reply follow:

Upper Montclair, N. J.
May 6, 1918.

Mr. Emil M. Scholz, Publisher,
The Evening Post,
New York City.

My Dear Mr. Scholz:

Your Advertising Manager finds the practicability of passing on my copy (being so "technical") such as to cause you to desire a cancellation of my contract. This is not entirely agreeable to me and I will remove his objec-

tion by submitting copy sufficiently in advance to allow of its being passed on conveniently.

I hope you will not interfere too seriously with the publication of these ideas. If they are wrong they will have no more effect than wavelets against a granite coast. If they are right—well, whatever effect they have will be slow—so slow as to give ample time for readjustments, I take it.

I feel sure of this: that the policy of allowing their publication can only increase the Post's prestige for independence and initiative. Your readers will approve—do approve—as I have ample evidence and so far as readers and circulations are concerned do you yourselves doubt its wisdom?

I confess to much disappointment that you thought it necessary to refuse further copy on cigarette advertising obviously in deference to your own advertising business. I would have supposed the Post strong enough not to fear accepting it, but of course you are the sole judges of that. Nevertheless when revulsion sets in against this over-indulgence (existence of which cannot be denied) no amount of advertising will stop it.

But there is nothing advertising has done to our civilization so momentous in my opinion as its effect on the character of the Press, and no side of the question is so dear to my heart as that, especially as it concerns the Evening Post, which I have known for forty years, and whose character I have regretted to see gradually change from an exceptionally independent and individual sheet, controlled more by ideas than business, to the conventional modern newspaper. As the quantity of its advertising and popular diversion devices increased it became more and more like "all the rest of them" and a highly successful advertising business proposition, I have no doubt.

I can't help likening the modern newspaper to that of the proverbial dog who is wagged by his tail—the advertising business—which has vastly outgrown his body—the original ideals of a newspaper, let us say. And no matter

how much he might like to, he can't let go his tail; nor can the newspapers "let go."

It is of course obvious that "the news" from day to day is a limited quantity, and cannot be increased nor decreased; whereas diversion can be ground out in unlimited amounts, and following a law of nature quality will always decline as quantity augments. So it follows that the modern newspaper as it increases the number of its advertising sheets must resort, when its limited news supply has been stretched by repetition and otherwise as far as it will go, to its unlimited supply of diversion for filling the empty spaces. Thus it has become to the public a very unreliable and unwieldy purveyor of the news and a great thief of time—a serious problem of our civilization demanding reform—and some day the reform will come. Is the Post afraid to let the truth be said about this question in its columns? I can conceive of its doing no harm—far from it—would it not be a "scoop" to be the first to allow this criticism to appear? Go ahead with your advertising business, but let me criticize even to the point of such exaggerated copy as shocked your business manager on April 19. Your readers might have appreciated the humor of this and buy your paper only the more, not the less, and your advertising business is in no danger, I should say, judging from your statement for April.

This lengthy letter only reflects my belief in the importance of the subject and my desire to continue my work if possible with the Evening Post rather than through some other medium, for I do not mean to drop the idea if we cannot agree.

If the American Press lest it offend "business" has so far abandoned ideals and sense of obligation to the public for the truth, as to suppress the advertisement of ideas even coming from the President of the U. S. it seems to me a serious matter. That this is universal I am not prepared to believe, but I know of two cases, the Boston Herald and Boston Post.

I enclose Mr. Sinclair Kennedy's advertisement which appeared in the Herald February 26, 1918. They were un-

der contract with Mr. Kennedy to publish this February 26, 28, March 2, and 5. They refused publication after the first issue and paid Mr. Kennedy $500 for failure to carry out contract. The Post refused the advertisement entirely.

It goes without saying I understand the acceptance or refusal of my copy must rest in your hands but isn't it a sign of weakness to draw the line at criticism of newspapers themselves or of advertising you carry, like cigarettes for instance?

I would appreciate it very much if you would go over the matter again with Mr. Villard and your associates and let me know the outcome.

To give the question specific form I enclose again the cigarette copy which Mr. Ahearn returned and a new one: "Some of Society's Returns from Advertising."

I shall be obliged if you would pass on both and return them to me.

Sincerely yours,
(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

THE NEW YORK EVENING POST

May fifteen, 1918.

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham,
509 Park Street,
Upper Montclair, N. J.
Dear Mr. Tinkham.

I have your letter of May sixth, and would call attention to the following clause in your contract with us:

> "This contract and all subsequent advertising copy used in connection therewith subject to the approval of the publisher of the NEW YORK EVENING POST."

The advertising copy which you have submitted does not meet with our approval, and we cannot print it.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Emil M. Scholz,
Publisher.

The advertisement of Mr. Sinclair Kennedy (Brookline, Mass.) referred to in my Scholz letter was this:

THE PRESIDENT,

In his address to the farmers, January 31, 1918, said:

"It means the utmost economy, even to the point where the pinch comes. It means the kind of concentration and self-sacrifice which is involved in the field of battle itself, where the object always looms greater than the individual."

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

In a statement published in the Official Bulletin, December 28, 1917, said:

"The people of the United States can render the most far-reaching patriotic service by refraining from the purchase of all unnecessary articles and by confining themselves to the use of only such things and the expenditure of only such money as is necessary to maintain their health and efficiency."

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL WAR SAVINGS COMMITTEE,

At the Boston City Club, December 3, 1917, said:

"The Government should have a free track in the workshop. It should have labor which is not competed for by unnecessary things. No matter how well we can afford to buy unnecessary things, no matter how well we can afford to do it, the Government cannot afford to have us do it."

This advertisement is inserted by Sinclair Kennedy, 1080 Beacon St., Brookline, Mass.

UNINFORMATORY COMMERCIAL ADVERTISING is the economic force by means of which we pull ourselves up by our boot-straps to dizzy heights of unproductive industry.

One of the pinnacles reached—perhaps the highest—is the modern newspaper which, from a simple purveyor of news and opinion, has developed into an unwieldly purveyor of diversion—how else describe this present-day product of the printing press designed to carry advertisements, the child of a civilization that knows how to read and whose Gods are Publicity and Boost?

The news? Yes, I suppose so, but stretched to a gossamer thinness over the empty spaces (which must be filled) of innumerable advertising sheets, inciting us to spend, spend regardless of needs and chiefly for luxuries and non-essentials.

Tons of reading matter, the wasteful creation of space-writers, correspondents, reporters and clown-artists, which we buy much as we do chewing gum; as a habit, for momentary diversion.

Try a newspaper-less day and see what little difference it makes.

Julian R. Tinkham, Upper Montclair, N. J.

Card No. 19, offered to Evening Post but declined.

This was the copy that so shocked (no wonder!) the Post's business manager. It was somewhat rude but the truth that had to come out, however painful.

Mr. Kennedy is more polite; he says:

"Advertising at present supports most newspapers and magazines. In this democracy where the people depend largely on the press for their facts and for guidance in their opinions, this advertising control is a grave danger. We are unwilling that any interests, by contributions to our colleges, should control the teaching of our young men and women. But it has come about that the advertising interests can, by the space they buy, determine what facts and what policies shall be presented to the public in the great popular college of the press, thus preventing the American public from profiting by the undoubted intelligence and integrity of the majority of journalists."

PRINTERS' INK AGAIN.

The following correspondence with Printers' Ink will be found interesting as bringing out sides of the subject not heretofore or but briefly dwelt on.

I called on Mr. Bliven after receiving his letter of March 30 and agreed to an interview.

We arranged that it should take the form of an exchange of letters. I regret to say, however, that the "interview" never appeared in Printers' Ink in any form!

Three unimportant paragraphs have been omitted from Mr. Bliven's second letter.

PRINTERS' INK PUBLISHING COMPANY
185 Madison Avenue, New York
March 30, 1918.

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham,
Upper Montclair,
New Jersey.

Dear Mr. Tinkham:

The writer has been very much interested in watching the series of advertisements which you have published in

the New York Evening Post. Your point of view is decidedly interesting, and is certainly most unusual—though the latter fact, of course, does not at all imply that you may not be correct in your attitude. I have been wondering whether you would not permit *Printers' Ink* to interview you in regard to your opinions on advertising, and publish the result in our pages? *Printers' Ink is*, as you may know, a journal devoted to advertising; but that does not mean that we are not broad-minded enough to be interested in the point of view of a man holding opinions such as your own. I feel sure that such an interview would be of the keenest interest to our readers; and I can guarantee that we will quote your statements accurately and without prejudice.

I don't know whether you are familiar with *Printers' Ink*, which is a weekly journal about to enter upon its fourth decade. Under separate cover I am sending you a copy which you may find interesting in looking through.

Very truly yours,
(Signed) Bruce Bliven,
Editorial Department.

PRINTERS' INK PUBLISHING COMPANY
185 Madison Avenue, New York.
April 12, 1918.

Mr. Julian R. Tinkham,
Upper Montclair,
New Jersey.

Dear Mr. Tinkham:

I think you and I are agreed that getting goods to the consumer at the lowest possible price which is consonant with desirable quality is a first consideration, when we view the matter in its broadest social aspects. I presume you will also agree that the larger a business becomes, the lower its cost per unit of sales. A striking example of this is Henry Ford's quantity production of his automobiles. Whatever, therefore, makes large scale production possible with the utmost rapidity, is in reality a public service,

even though it involves an expenditure of money which comes from the consumer.

It is my contention that advertising which enables a business to go from a small beginning to a very large volume of trade in a minimum of time, performs a service to the individual who buys that company's goods, by enabling the company to sell at a less price than would otherwise be possible. Do you not agree with me that this is true?

Moreover, advertising performs a service to the consumer by stabilizing demand in advance, which means a lower cost of production. The manufacturer who does not advertise has no guarantee of a market for his goods one year ahead. The advertiser, on the other hand, knows positively that the demand for his goods will continue as long as he advertises intelligently. He can therefore buy raw materials in large quantities on a rising market and hold them against his future needs, instead of taking small quantities of raw materials at the market price. The ready-made clothing business of today is proving that very definitely. Great national advertisers, such as Hart, Schaffner & Marx, have been able to buy for their future requirements, knowing that advertising has stabilized their business, and are thus giving the consumer clothing at very much less—perhaps one-half as much—as would be the case if they had to buy on the market today. Do you not agree with me that this is true?

From the consumer's point of view, social welfare demands that products should be of honest quality, as well as low in price. Advertising is a guarantee of that honesty in quality, for the advertiser has invested thousands, perhaps millions, of dollars in building a good-will for himself among the buying public. If he failed for a single season to give honest quality in his merchandise, the value of this good-will would be destroyed; and the loss on the investment in advertising would be far greater than the temporary profit on a season's dishonest dealing. Do you not agree with me that this is true?

The prosperity of any country is gauged, roughly, by

the degree of its civilization. The greater the degree of civilization, the more enormous and complicated are men's wants, the larger the manufacturing necessary to fulfill those wants, the more labor there is, and the greater the income of the individual producer who is in turn the consumer. This is an axiom of elementary economics which I know you would not attempt to deny. [!] If I can show you then, that advertising is a potent factor in advancing this material civilization, I think I have proved my point that advertising has a social justification. I believe it is universally admitted by economists that the revolution which has taken place, for example, in the home life of the American farmer, has been brought about by advertising in an enormously shorter time than would have been possible without advertising. The automobile, the phonograph, the vacuum cleaner, the kitchen cabinet, and many other smaller devices have been sold to the entire nation within a very short period of time, through the use of advertising. In fact, I don't believe there is a single useful device for the advancement of material civilization which you can name to me, which has not been forwarded through advertising. The farm tractor, which may yet prove a decisive factor in meeting the food problem and winning the war, could never be put into the hands of a sufficient number of farmers without the advertising which is being used on its behalf.

Incidentally, the greatest factor in improving the condition of the farmer has been the periodicals which reach him, and which have revolutionized his business as a farmer (through the agricultural press) as they have awakened his wife to a sense of the possibilities of life (through the women's publications and the general magazines.) Because of the revenue from advertising these periodicals are sold to their readers at a price which is less than the bare cost of producing them. Were advertising eliminated, it would be necessary to charge $5 instead of $1.50 or $2.00 for such periodicals; and their circulation would be so much smaller that they could not possibly perform the great service which they do. Even if adver-

tising caused goods to be sold at a slightly higher price—which I deny to be the case—the social value of the periodicals which are made possible by advertising would more than compensate the consumer for such an additional expense.

Instead of advertising causing prices to be higher, I can prove that advertising holds down prices in a rising market. The price of all products has risen in the past few months something like 40 per cent while investigation among a large number of advertised products proves that in many cases their prices have not been increased at all, while in other cases the increase has been so slight that it is out of all proportion to the general rule. This is because the price of an advertised product is frequently itself advertised; and therefore, the advertiser is bound to maintain that price even though, as is the case in many instances today, he sacrifices all profit to do so. At the last meeting of the Associated Advertising Clubs, *Printers' Ink* presented to the organization a list of 56 products, none of which had raised their prices to the consumer. It would be absolutely impossible to present any such list of non-advertised products which have not increased in price anywhere from 10 to 100 per cent.

With renewed thanks for your courtesy in giving me the opportunity in discussing the subject with you, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Bruce Bliven,
Editorial Department.

Upper Montclair, N. J.
May 18, 1918.

My Dear Mr. Bliven:

After re-reading your letter, I find the subject a difficult one to handle by generalization. It seems to me it can only be satisfactorily discussed by taking specific cases. I agree that generally speaking, the larger a manufacturing business becomes the more manufacturing costs can be reduced, but not entirely with your conclusion that "therefore whatever makes large scale production possible with

the utmost rapidity is in reality a public service." For the consumer doesn't always get the benefit of the reduction; selling expenses may eat it up and, very obviously, the service to society will depend entirely upon what the article is. It might be something the public doesn't need particularly in greater quantities like soda-crackers, or were perhaps better off entirely without, like cigarettes.

Advertising undoubtedly makes possible large scale production by stimulating consumption. But I can't say I believe the public is benefited much by, for instance, the enormous cracker diet prescribed by advertisements. Society cannot stuff itself with Uneeda Biscuits without eating less of some other food which would perhaps be better for it. Excuse me if I digress a little to say something about the economics of cracker advertising. I can't help asking myself what it means, this fast, furious and continuous advertising of such a familiar and homely article of food as crackers; nothing informatory about it. Fifty years ago my mother sent me to the grocery store to buy them. They were not advertised particularly in those days yet my parents knew about them and passed the valuable information on to their children.

The soda cracker (called Boston then) was not considered a life and death essential and millions weren't spent continually boosting it. Without pictures of attractive trained nurses and ecstatic children to remind us, we unostentatiously and unconsciously bought it when, as and if needed. Perhaps the price was not so low as the Uneeda but neither was the quality.

If sales fall off when manufacturers stop advertising crackers it shows conclusively they are not an essential food and that advertising simply hypnotizes society into abnormal cracker consumption. They have got to keep the patient under the anaesthetic lest he come out of his trance and buy—educators, let us say, whose superior quality has been almost their *sole* advertisement.

But when we come to the large scale production made possible chiefly by advertising of such economically un-

essential articles as chewing gum and cigarettes, I confess I have to take off my hat to the process!

The chewing gum habit, camouflage of eating, solace of the subway, what *would* we do without this great but inelegant American diversion, on tap everywhere and which supports the most gorgeous electric sign in Broadway? And if the consumption of cigarettes will beat the Germans we certainly have no need to worry; for think of it, that has been increased in four years from 14 to 30 billions!

From the consequences of such advertising I take up with pleasure your allusion to Henry Ford's quantity production, an excellent example of the necessity for separate analysis of specific cases. For what two national advertisers could stand further apart in usefulness to society from unlimited productivity, than say Wrigley and Henry Ford—chewing gum and the ubiquitous flivver? Ford advertisements carried a real "message"; they announced something new for which there was a tremendous demand and need. Is there one advertisement in a hundred that does this?

The first in the market with a serviceable motor vehicle at a very low price, no wonder Ford's business increased by leaps and bounds. Advertising to further this was in my opinion legitimate and useful to society, but it only hastened his success—nothing could have prevented it—and quantity production was assured him from the start owing to the automatic advertising device with which each car was equipped. By the way, how much was he an advertiser in the usual way? I don't remember. He evidently doesn't find it necessary now to keep "everlastingly at it"—like cracker and chewing gum purveyors, for instance.

The theory that once an advertiser always an advertiser or you lose business, if true, is an indictment either of advertising or your business. For the conclusion must be that (1) your commodity is not as represented, thus requiring a constant supply of new dupes which advertising furnishes—a fraud on society—or that (2) your article is

a luxury or non-essential whose unnecessary consumption can be greatly stimulated by advertising—a waste to society—or (3) (the case of competitive advertising of essentials) that an undue proportion of business has been diverted your way (without any marked benefit to society) and resumes a normal course in another direction when the advertising influence is removed; for of course the demand for the staples and necessaries (flour, sugar, bread, coffee, clothing, etc.) must remain constant and the total consumption probably unchanged, advertising or no advertising. I am glad to take as an illustration of this Messrs. Hart, Schaffner & Marx whom you describe as being able to sell ready-made clothing in great quantities at very much less—perhaps one-half as much—(than ever before?) through advertising. You cite them as examples of advertisers who know positively that the demand for their goods will continue as long as they advertise, and, per contra I suppose, that it will discontinue should they stop advertising. I conclude from this that the public has not found your premises to be strictly correct—is not saturated with the conviction that they *are* selling, quality for quality, at half price—or its support would be continued without incessant advertising. For do you not believe that such terms, in a great essential like clothing, would surely advertise themselves in the end and the business become self-perpetuating? If this has not occurred with H. S. & M. I conclude they belong in classes 1 and 3 and their advertising to be of no particular benefit to society, however profitable it may be to themselves.

I must disagree with you flatly that advertising is any guarantee whatsoever of quality. "Guarantee" is loosely used now-a-days and is meaningless unaccompanied by surety. I am aware of no surety that accompanies advertising. Boost can be applied as easily to dishonest as honest goods and as successfully, because you can fool *some* of the people all the time and there is a new sucker born every minute—so they say.

I agree that diversity of industries is a gauge of civilization and believe, too, that a country can support with

advantage many activities devoted only to art and the diversion and luxury of its population, rather than to its material support. But when the percentage of such activities gets too big and there is excessive neglect of the production of the necessaries it is shown immediately by the shortage of food, clothing, etc., and consequent high prices. I believe this to be our case and the basic cause of the high cost of living, greatly aggravated by the war.

My Evening Post cards have attacked advertising as an important contributor to this situation: directly as unproductive in itself—indirectly as a stimulus to excessive consumption and non-essential production. But I also have repeatedly said that advertising for a specific purpose or for introducing a new article that supplies a want or saves expense—informatory advertising in other words—I considered beneficial. In questioning me about useful devices you evidently overlooked this. But surely automobile and phonograph advertising is no longer informatory. I would call it a stimulus to luxurious spending pure and simple. As to the enormous advantage to society from rapid distribution you claim for advertising—I am skeptical about it. I credit demand as able to accomplish the distribution of essentials and important labor-saving devices fast enough. Advertisements of articles like farm tractors occupy so infinitesimal a part of the total of advertising propaganda, both out-door and newspaper, now flooding the United States as to be negligible in a discussion involving general principles.

I really do not know how much the farmer's condition has been improved by the periodicals which reach him. For the good of his business, however, I can conceive he might prefer the labor locked up in the creation of tons of publications, designed primarily to carry advertisements, to so much reading matter.

That society could to advantage spare this labor for productive use by the farmer there is no question in my mind —nor but that society would benefit greatly by a reduction of the modern newspaper to ⅛ of its size and by the elimination of ⅞ of the present magazines and countless

similar by-products of advertising—present company always excepted, of course! The changed character of the press in the United States is the most serious consequence of our advertising mania.

I shall not attempt to answer your contentions regarding the relation of prices to advertising. Only comprehensive statistics which I hardly think you supply, can, it seems to me, warrant reliable conclusions on this question. I would like to ask a question however: Why is it that in the United States, the greatest advertising country in the world, the cost of living has always been much higher than in England, France or Germany—if advertising tends to lower prices and keep them down?

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Julian R. Tinkham.

MODEST CLAIMS OF THE PROFESSION

(Extracts from Newspaperdom of Jan. 10, 1918.)

"Advertising is the foundation of American government, industry, commerce, finance, and education. It grows bigger in scope and volume year after year because men of broad vision realize that advertising turns the wheels of industry—and it is by prosperity of industry that this nation stands out from the world's nations as the greatest of them all."

"Millions of dollars invested in publications carrying the advertiser's *messages* to the people."

"Employment of thousands of men and women earning large salaries through their demonstrated capacity in advertising."

"Thousands of millions of dollars invested in manufacturing plants kept going by advertising, and the rights of the people to purchase what appears to be most adaptable and economical via *lessons presented by the printed word.*"

Apparently advertising is not responsible for the creation of the world but *is* a second Messiah.

"Messages to the people," "lessons presented by the printed word"—

God help the people who look for messages and lessons in the advertisements of ten or more different brands of cigarettes, chewing gums, corsets, cosmetics, beers, etc., etc.

CONCLUSION

No advertisements without taxation should be permitted on land or buildings not owned by the advertiser unless the business advertised is itself also located there.

Advertisements untaxed should be barred from the public conveyances of all companies whose charters and franchises were not specifically granted for or to include advertising purposes.

No publications of any kind should be given preferential postal rates or be carried in the mails at a loss to the Government by reason of the advertising matter they carry. No more Government subsidizing of advertising.

Newspaper and periodical advertisements might however be exempt from taxation, as they are not exposed to the public view and become private property by purchase.

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